

THE MJ

Inward Investment Guide to the UK

A special supplement produced by **THE MJ** for the **mipim UK** event, Olympia, London, October 21-23 2015



INSIDE: England's regions – London, the South East, the South West, Eastern, West Midlands, East Midlands, Yorkshire & Humberside, North West, North East **PLUS:** Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland



The new power
 More resources will be given to Greater Manchester as part of the Government's devolution of power to the North – page 20

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The UK is open to investors

Welcome to our second annual investment guide to the UK's nine regions and three countries which coincides with the second MIPIM UK conference and exhibition in London's Olympia

The guide is produced by the publishers of *The MJ*, the UK's leading weekly publication and website for local authority directors and their suppliers.

These are exciting times for UK regeneration, property and economic development. The pick-up in the UK's GDP has seen investors' traditional fascination for London now spread right across the UK, especially to the North of England. The government, led by the Treasury and Chancellor George Osborne, has been rigorously promoting the so-called Northern Powerhouse and the dynamic Greater Manchester area as act a counterweight to the overheated capital. The Government's devolution agenda has led to the creation of powerful sub-regional structures to take on strategic responsibilities like health and transport through new combined authorities initially in urban areas such as Manchester,

Leeds, Newcastle, Sheffield and Birmingham. Devolution of all business rate income in England by 2020 means local authorities now have an even greater incentive to attract investment.

In addition the UK's cash-strapped local authorities have learned that their considerable property assets can be a source of revenue rather than a one-off windfall and are actively seeking partners.

I hope this supplement will give you an idea of the great investment potential in the UK. At MIPIM UK where we have a stand I look forward to meeting both investors and local authorities to hear of their successful case studies.



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A message from the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

I'm pleased to be with you at the second MIPIM UK, at Olympia. My ministerial colleagues and I are only too happy to support this market-facing event, which fosters partnership between public and private sectors in order to promote growth.

As you begin this important gathering, don't forget the significance of what you do. At the start of the second half of this 'turnaround' decade, the UK has a global lead as a

major property investment capital. Our Government's long-term economic plan, to promote the UK as one of the strongest and most open economies in the developed world, benefits from a world-leading real estate sector. You offer not only a safe haven in which British institutions can invest, but also attract billions in investment from overseas.

When local government works with the property industry, the result is



synergy, and the economy grows faster: it's that simple. Government plays its part too, with Growth Deals and Devolution Deals

that create powerful, local platforms for the creation of thousands of new jobs and new homes. The recent announcement of the National Infrastructure Commission has delivered further confidence to the sector.

And we now have this great opportunity, MIPIM UK 2015, to leverage all of this activity; to attract more investment, from domestic investors or from the significant Foreign Direct

Investment community. I wish you every success in your networking, and in finding the right partners for each of your projects

My ministers and officials look forward to working with you, to turbo-charge growth in your local economy over these next five years. We hope to meet many of you over the next couple of days. Enjoy the conference.

Greg Clark

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'The UK had the highest number of overseas investments ever and as a result the highest number of jobs created, together worth about £13bn in funding'



The last year was a record financial year for inward investment in the UK, but the success rate for investors is still patchy

Record year for inward investment

Michael Burton gives an overview of the last 12 months of inward investment, as the UK embarks on a period of change

The UK economy is now among the fastest growing in the developed world and the government is keen to welcome investors to help develop its infrastructure as well as jobs and lay down a long-term foundation for consistent growth. Chancellor George Osborne's announcement at the recent Conservative Party conference that English local authorities will be able to keep 100% of their business rate means they now have a direct, vested interest in promoting their areas to investors and new business.

The good news is that the last financial year was a record year for inward investment within the UK according to UK Trade and Investment. The UK had the highest number of overseas investments ever and as a result the highest number of jobs created, together worth about £13bn in funding. With 1,988 foreign investment projects, 12% up on the previous year, the total amount is now over one trillion pounds. The UK is the number one destination in Europe for foreign direct investment.

The success rate for investors however is still patchy. London continues to be the dominant destination for overseas investment. London accounts

for 40% of all overseas-owned businesses in England while Westminster is home to more non UK-owned businesses than half of all England's district council areas combined. Of the 1,988 foreign investment projects, London's 796 is not too different from the entire rest of England's 905, followed by Scotland at 119, Wales at 101 and Northern Ireland at 48. Of these financial, professional and business services were the largest category. This explains why the government has been so determined to promote regional cities like Leeds, Manchester, Birmingham and Sheffield by giving them more devolved powers, something that cities in Europe take for granted and have enjoyed for years.

To help England's 324 local authorities, the 39 Local Enterprise Partnerships plus

investors decide where to locate, Grant Thornton produces an annual analysis, its *Business Location Index* each autumn. It aims to show investors that there are other attractive places to invest outside London as well as offering information that will help local authority areas and Local Enterprise Partnerships recognise their own strengths and weaknesses and market themselves accordingly.

The latest guide shows there are 23,000 foreign-owned businesses in England of which 8000 are in London – mainly in central London – 4000 in the South East and 5000 spread across the East of England, West Midlands and the North West. Cities and towns outside London with sizeable foreign-owned businesses include Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham, Cambridge and Milton Keynes.

Reasons for investors choosing particular areas are varied. The main attractions are proximity to markets and customers, the regulatory and business climate, a stable political climate and the quality of life. Workforce skills, productivity, transport connectivity and education are also important. Grant Thornton collects data on all these factors and is able to produce the *Index* which ranks each local authority area. London inevitably features highly with London boroughs accounting for eight of the top performers but outside the capital other strong business performers are Cambridge, Birmingham, Manchester, Bristol and Liverpool while locations along main transport routes are also popular.

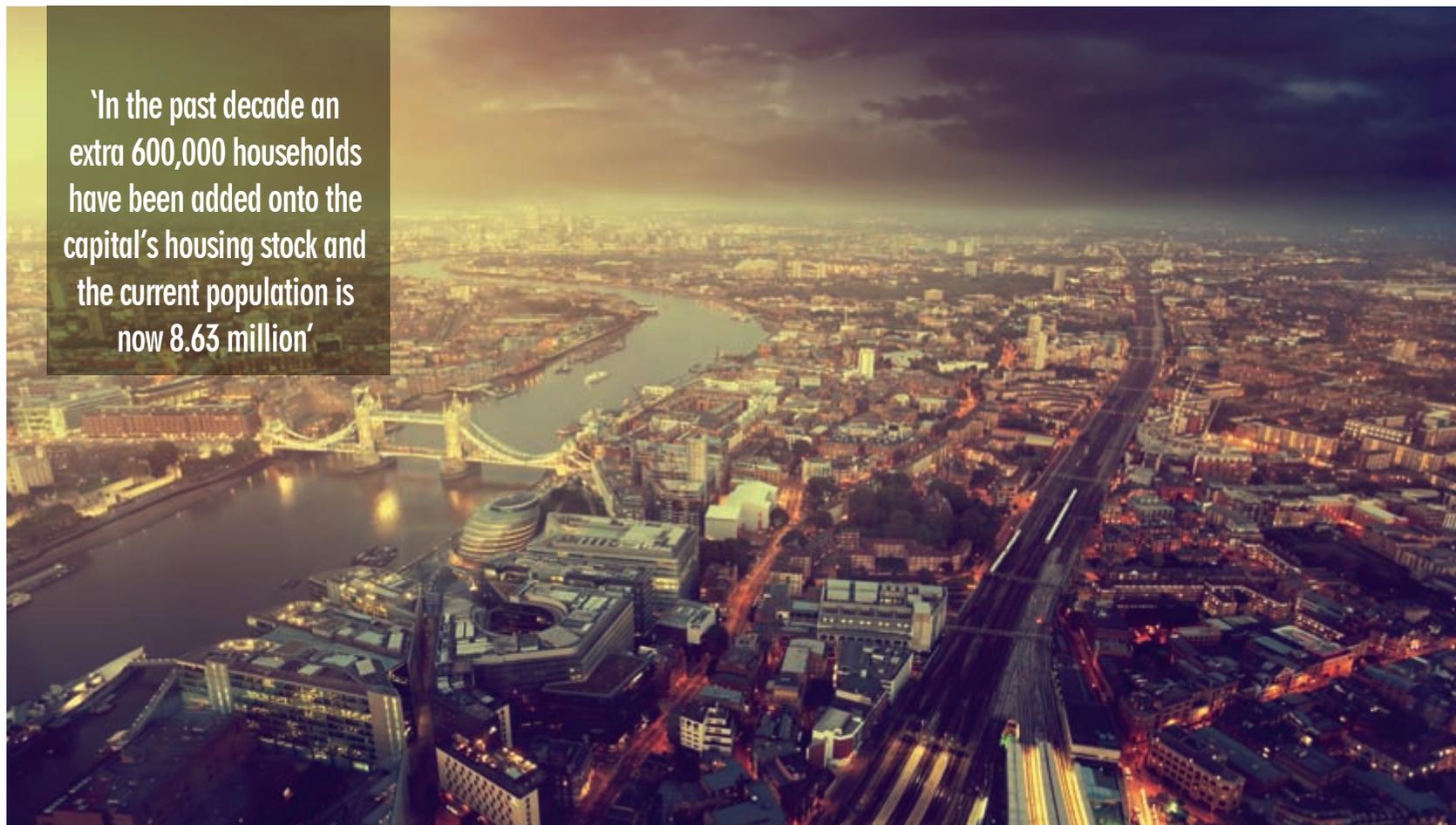
However there are also cost issues to be taken into account. London may be attractive to

investors as a quality location but it is also expensive and many investors prefer areas where costs like rates, housing and wages are low. Costs are higher in the South and lower in the North so on this index towns and cities like Hull, Liverpool and Oldham in the North West and Hartlepool and Redcar and Cleveland perform well because they are the most affordable. When quality and cost are put together, the strong performing regions are the South West, North West, East Midlands and Yorkshire and Humber well as the core cities, Manchester, Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Liverpool and Newcastle upon Tyne.

Phillip Woolley, Partner at Grant Thornton UK LLP, said: 'The *Business Location Index* has been created to help local enterprise partnerships (LEPs) and local authorities better understand their strengths and assets as business locations. Armed with this analysis, they will be better equipped to develop their inward investment strategy and to promote their places to investors.'

Grant Thornton's *Business Location Index* officially launches on 28 October at which point it will be available for download at www.grant-thornton.co.uk/publicsector

'In the past decade an extra 600,000 households have been added onto the capital's housing stock and the current population is now 8.63 million'



The London economy continues to outperform the UK in recent times

The largest conurbation in Europe

Despite housing and transport issues, the English capital has managed to still be a big draw for investors

The *de facto* capital of Europe, London is the economic powerhouse of the UK and a city which has grown dramatically in the past decade both economically and in population.

In the past decade an extra 600,000 households have been added onto the capital's housing stock and the current population is now 8.63 million. Its skyline has seen a profusion of iconic office blocks with exotic names such as the Shard, Cheesegrater, Walkie Talkie and the Gherkin.

Indeed there are currently 263 tall buildings planned for London from Bishopsgate in the City to the former Battersea Power Station at Nine Elms where a new quarter is under construction. This is in addition to major development around King's Cross station, and the former Olympic Park in Stratford. But previously unfashionable suburbs like Croydon in the south and Hayes in the west are also being redeveloped.

To alleviate London's congested underground, a new

line, Crossrail, stretching from Maidenhead in Berkshire to Liverpool Street will begin opening from next year.

London is the ninth largest city in the world and the largest metropolitan area in the EU. If it were a country it would be the eighth largest in Europe. It also has more overseas visitors than any other city in the world

London's economic centre is the City, the world's leading financial centre, and a source of huge tax revenues for the UK, which has expanded into Docklands to the east. London

generates almost a quarter of the UK's GDP and is forecast to continue expanding. In addition the capital attracts daily commuters from the South East and East of England regions.

The London economy has consistently outperformed the UK over the past decade, especially during the recent recession where its high concentration of business services helped shield London from cuts in other sectors. The outlook is for London to remain at the forefront of UK economic growth given its concentration

of high value added exporting service sectors. London is also expected to account for an increasing share of UK employment over the coming decade, adding an additional 319,000 jobs, or more than one in every eight jobs created across the country. The wider Greater London area will account for one in four jobs created.

A study by Oxford Economics for the Corporation of London shows that a key feature of London is that its polarisation from the rest of the UK economy in terms of economic

performance stems from its ability to attract highly skilled workers. Over the coming decade, Greater London's working-age population is projected to expand by over 620,000, with 155,000 expected in Central London. By contrast, the working age population of the UK (excluding London) is projected to decline over the same period.

All this also comes at a price in terms of shortage of suitable housing and an overcrowded transport system, though the latter has in recent years attracted millions of pounds in investment to upgrade, lines, trains and ageing signalling. In the past eight years, despite the recession, central London has experienced double digit price rises and while these are stabilising, prices are continuing to increase in the cheaper, outer suburbs.

But because of its expanding employment, cultural opportunities, nightlife, cosmopolitan cuisine and plentiful parks the capital will always encourage young people with disposable incomes.

Top performing areas in London plus their costs

Rank	District	Business location index score	National Rank (out of 324)	Cost score	National Rank (out of 324)
1	City of Westminster	165.03	1	333.33	1
2	Camden	143.55	2	251.07	3
3	Tower Hamlets	141.57	3	221.81	4
4	Islington	136.34	4	204.77	5
5	Southwark	130.01	5	175.77	7

Source: Business Location Index (Grant Thornton Analytics)

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'With Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, East Sussex, Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Kent, Oxfordshire, Surrey and West Sussex, the South East is the largest UK region in terms of population at 8.7 million

Windsor, Berkshire: together with Maidenhead, a 'royal borough' outside Greater London

An attractive, prosperous region with a productive workforce to match

Just across the English Channel from mainland Europe, the **South East of England** offers high levels of economic activity as well as varied scenery

With everything from seaside resorts to rolling hills, from quaint villages to bustling cities and ports, the South East is one of the most attractive regions of England – and one of the most prosperous.

It is the second wealthiest region after London, the UK capital located on its northern borders. Second only to the capital, it boasts the country's largest economy and highest per capita income.

It is also one of the country's biggest regions – the third largest in England, covering 19,100km² and representing 8% of the total area of the UK.

With London on the doorstep, it extends northwards as far as Milton Keynes while to the South it includes a long stretch of the coastline just a few miles across the English Channel from France and Belgium.

With its constituent counties, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, East Sussex, Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Kent, Oxfordshire, Surrey and West Sussex, the South East is the largest UK region in terms

of population which stood at 8.7 million in the last census, 14% of the national total.

It is also densely populated, with 458 people per km² according to the latest figures, the third highest of all the regions.

A fifth of the population live in rural areas, while people in the South East enjoy the longest life expectancy in the UK.

It is an economically active region, responsible for nearly 15% of the UK's output according to the most recent survey.

This is reflected in its unemployment rate, the joint lowest together with the South West at just 6.0%, while the number in employment stood at nearly 76%, higher than the UK's 71.5% overall.

The workforce providing those levels of productivity is relatively highly educated.

The percentage of the region's working age population without any qualifications is just 6.9% on the latest figures, compared with 9.9% for the country as a whole.

High levels of economic activity and an educated workforce are also

reflected in how much people in the region are paid.

In April 2012, median gross weekly earnings for full-time adult employees stood at £556, the highest outside London and above the UK median of £506.

The gross disposable household income of South East residents was the second highest in the UK after London at £18,100 per head in 2011,

compared with £16,000 for the UK.

Relative wealth inevitably also affects house prices, which are the country's second highest, averaging £299,000 on the latest figures compared with £242,000 for the UK, increasing by 2.9% in the year to June 2013, compared with 8.1% in London.

Private enterprise completed construction of 17,300 new homes

in the South East in 2011/12, the highest level of all the English regions and countries of the UK, contributing 16% to the national total. The region has several major universities, attracting students from throughout the UK and abroad. The best known is the University of Oxford, famous for its ornate colleges and its rowing teams on the Thames.

The pioneering Open University, which made higher education available through open learning to people everywhere, is based in Milton Keynes.

The main road transport routes are the motorways connecting to the M25 which circles London and connects routes from other parts of the country, while the main intercontinental air connection is Gatwick Airport. Heathrow Airport is in Greater London but also serves the South East region.

Major rail routes include High Speed 1 passing through Kent and connecting to the Channel Tunnel, while the ports of Dover and Folkestone run ferry services to mainland Europe.

Top performing areas in the South East plus their costs					
Rank	District	Business location index score	National Rank (out of 324)	Cost score	National Rank (out of 324)
1	Wokingham	119.92	14	135.26	30
2	Oxford	115.94	21	138.04	25
3	Vale of White Horse	115.32	22	113.32	66
4	Reading	114.37	23	123.45	48
5	Windsor & Maidenhead	112.33	26	155.56	12

Source: Grant Thornton Business Location Index

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WORK, LIVE & PLAY IN MILTON KEYNES

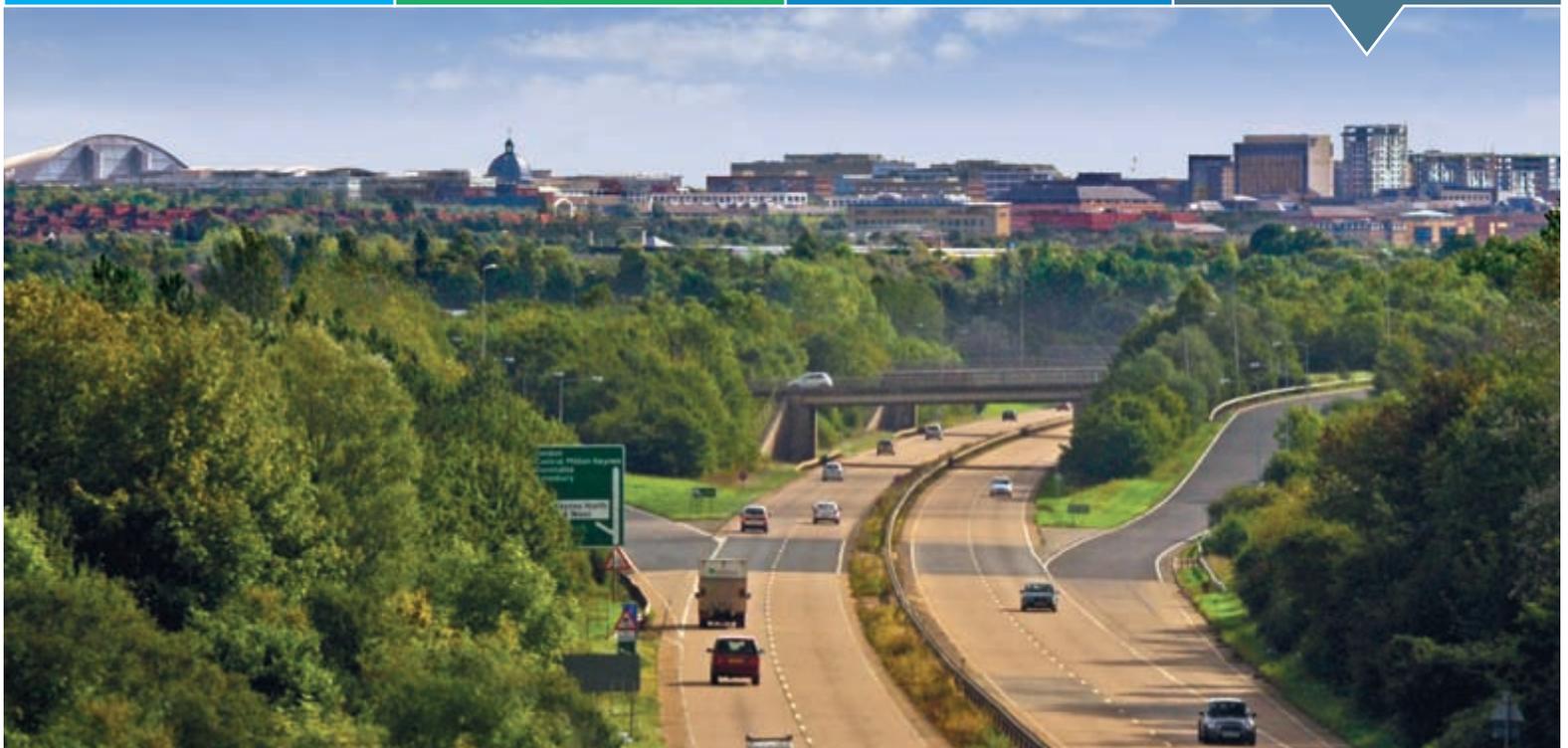
Milton Keynes is the fastest growing place in the country.

Established in 1967 with a population of 60,000, Milton Keynes is one of Britain's most successful destinations, and has the fastest growing economy outside of the Capital.

Milton Keynes has a population of over a quarter of a million and growing. It is a perfect place to work, live and play with 200 hectares of new employment land available.

Situated in the heart of the UK with excellent road, rail and transport links, Milton Keynes is within easy reach of London, Birmingham, Cambridge and Oxford, as well as London Luton Airport. Half of the country's population can be reached within two hours.

Little wonder that Milton Keynes is home to some of the world's leading businesses, as well as some exciting new enterprises with ambitions to be the best known brands of tomorrow.



A place for business

Milton Keynes is consistently praised at national level – and renowned independent ‘think tank’ Centre for Cities is one of many advocates.

Centre for Cities’ latest report showcases why people want to come and work in Milton Keynes, notably:

- Milton Keynes is number one for job growth in the last decade. On a percentage basis, Milton Keynes has the largest net increase in jobs - more than London, Cambridge and Brighton.
- Milton Keynes is the top location outside of London for business start-ups, and in the top 10 for patents registered for the first time.

Milton Keynes has a wide variety of businesses located in the city. Large, medium, small – Milton Keynes serves them all. Businesses can relocate to Milton Keynes from any part of the UK or abroad at a competitive cost and with ease.

Milton Keynes is part of the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) area covering Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Aylesbury Vale and Northamptonshire. Assets included in the SEMLEP area include a £39 billion economy, 1.7 million people, 75,000 businesses, 35 innovation centres, seven universities, four university technical colleges, one STEM college and 10 further education colleges.

Invest MK

Invest Milton Keynes, part of Milton Keynes Council, plays a vital role in attracting, locating and retaining national and international businesses, providing essential information on locations, demographics and supporting companies into making the decision to locate, relocate or expand in Milton Keynes.

Pam Gosal, Head of Economic Development and Inward Investment

at Invest Milton Keynes, highlights the working uniqueness of Milton Keynes: “What makes Milton Keynes special is our geographical location and accessibility. It’s a city people want to work in and one that is increasingly attracting the high levels of skilled people that companies need to develop and grow.”

Many existing businesses in Milton Keynes have expanded in recent years. John Lewis, one of the biggest and most respected retail brand names in the country, has recently opened its second distribution centre and is working on its third at Magna Park.

A £70m redevelopment and expansion of the Intu Milton Keynes shopping centre, the most significant in a decade, is also planned.

MKDP

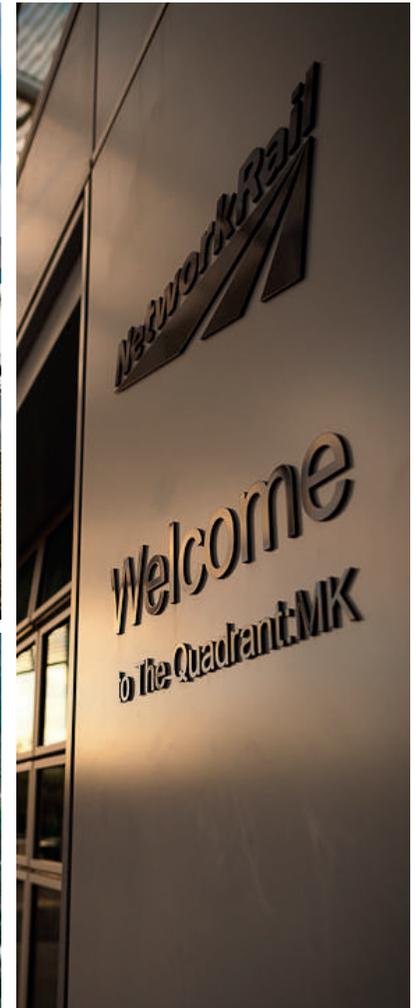
The Milton Keynes Development Partnership (MKDP) works closely with

Invest Milton Keynes to facilitate the city’s continued growth and economic success by promoting the development of its land assets with third party developers and investors. There are currently more than 100 potential property development opportunities in retail, residential, industrial and commercial available across the city, from the 65 acre site National Bowl site, a sport, leisure and concert venue that includes an iconic open-air amphitheatre through to a strategic site of up to 21 acres adjacent to the main line railway station.

Famous names

Hundreds of national and international businesses have their headquarters or significant offices within the city.

Infiniti Red Bull Racing, Honda F1, Network Rail, Volkswagen Finance Services, Santander, John Lewis Distribution, Waitrose National



Milton Keynes is alive with opportunity. These are just a few reasons to do business in Milton Keynes. To discuss more, contact Invest Milton Keynes on +44 (0)1908 200800

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• investmiltonkeynes.com

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Distribution Centre, Niftylift, Mercedes Benz, Marshall Amplification, Brioche Pasquier, AG Barr and Coca Cola are just a few.

Key sectors in Milton Keynes include:

- Technology (AirWatch and Tech Mahindra)
- Advanced Manufacturing (Aero Tec Laboratories, MSD Animal Health and ABB Robotics)
- High Performance (Infiniti Red Bull Racing, Mugen Euro Ltd and Honda)
- Finance & Business (Mercedes-Benz and TSYS Managed Services)
- Logistics (River Island)

Most of the Milton Keynes workforce consists of home-grown talent, 53% of which is managerial, professional or skilled. Milton Keynes' workforce is officially ranked as one of the country's most productive. Young, qualified professionals are attracted to the wide number of training and apprenticeship schemes.

Milton Keynes is also home to some of the biggest brands in leisure and entertainment. The Centre: MK (240 retail shops) and Intu Milton Keynes (55 shops) are located in the heart of the city

centre, close to a thriving leisure district with the busiest theatre in the UK outside London.

A place for living

Milton Keynes is a growing, welcoming, and ever changing city.

More than 250,000 people live in the Milton Keynes. The city is community-orientated and comprises three original towns and 13 villages and 70 neighbourhoods, each maintaining its own particular individuality.

By 2026 the population is estimated to grow to 304,950 and 1,750 additional homes will be constructed per year. Milton Keynes Council plans to develop a further seven primary and secondary schools over the next eight years.

RegenerationMK is Milton Keynes Council's programme focusing on providing neighbourhoods with improved housing and public space, and supporting and empowering communities through increased skills and access to employment.

This is to be a partnership with a yet to be chosen private sector partner for the next 15 years.

Education

Milton Keynes has 102 schools, two universities and three college campuses serving the city and surrounding areas, most recently opening University Campus Milton Keynes (UCMK) in partnership with the University of Bedfordshire. Access to higher education is also available through Milton Keynes College and the world famous Open University.

Cranfield University is also nearby providing world class post graduate engineers and technology courses.

A smart city

Milton Keynes is an established 'smart city' with a number of ground-breaking technological achievements; most recently the development of driverless electric pods by our Transport Systems Catapult, the Future City Programme and MK: Smart.

MK: Smart is an ongoing innovation programme between Milton Keynes Council, BT and The Open University. The framework of MK:Smart ensures that sustainability and energy issues are managed as the city grows, with data processed through the innovative Milton Keynes Data Hub. The

Enterprise Ecosystem based at UCMK is a collaboration with business where data and analysis is shared to support the development of new applications.

A special place to play

While yet to celebrate its 50th anniversary, Milton Keynes has a surprising number of heritage and historical sites, some of which have been documented for their significance in British history – for instance Bletchley Park, which housed secret codebreaking work during World War Two.

Sports fans can note that Milton Keynes is often called 'the extreme sports capital of the UK', with plenty to offer year-round from water skiing to indoor snowboarding. If adrenaline isn't your preference, there are more than 350 restaurants, bars and cafes providing cuisine from all over the world.

Many visitors to Milton Keynes are amazed by the sheer quantity of green space within the borough. The Parks Trust maintains Milton Keynes' 5,000 acres of park and nature, including Campbell Park – a green oasis in the heart of the city.



Today's tomorrow starts here

Think Basingstoke and you'll probably have images of a new build town, punctuated with business parks and 1970's office blocks close to the town centre. You're along the right lines in thinking that the town is shaped by business but may be surprised that Basingstoke's commercial roots span as far back as the Bronze Age.

Since its earliest origins Basingstoke has developed industry and infrastructure to support the town's prosperity. From a trade route c.1000 BC, the market and mills of William the Conqueror's era, through to the influx of HQ's looking for a London alternative in the sixties, Basingstoke has always been built for business.

Today, you'll find an energetic hi-tech centre offering a pro-business environment, with imaginative regeneration and on-going investment transforming for a successful future.

Take a look at the creative redevelopment plans for Basing View, a 65 acre urban business district right next to the town centre that will deliver 650,000 sq ft of new development and you will see that the town is ambitious.

And as technology shapes life and society for the future, Basingstoke is growing as one of the UK's hotspots for technological innovation. With rich tech capabilities and a strong digital cluster outside London, its SETsquared incubation hub is putting the town right at the cutting edge of new, exciting and vital next generation technology.

Adrian Braine, SETsquared Entrepreneur in Residence, highlights the growing momentum for technology in the town: "Basingstoke's vision and technology heritage creates an exciting opportunity. We

are thrilled to be at the heart of a vibrant tech community enabling a new wave of companies that are at the forefront of technological innovation."

Home to big names

Already home to big names like the AA, Axa Wealth, Sony and De La Rue, one national treasure making an impression this autumn is the John Lewis and Waitrose Partnership.

Impressed by the town's socio-demographic appeal and great connections, they have chosen Basingstoke as the location for a combined store, only the third of its kind in the country, creating over 350 jobs and representing a £7million investment in the town. Add to this the opening of Network Rail's new £50million state of the art signalling and training centre for London and the South East, Basingstoke's economic vitality continues to gather pace.

Leader of Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, Cllr Clive Sanders highlights the town's ambition and the growing sense of momentum in Basingstoke:

"This is an exciting time for Basingstoke. Lots of things are happening to strengthen its role as an economic powerhouse in the south as well as a great place to live. The message is getting across to the property world about all it has to offer to investors and employers.

"Where else can offer land ready for development so close to a mainline station to London and with great facilities on the doorstep. And what we have to offer is getting even better in the future, with a new combined John Lewis and Waitrose store opening next month."

Business doesn't mean just London

It is not only a highly skilled local workforce that attracts companies to the area. As commercial property prices continue to rise in Central London and elsewhere in the South East, Basingstoke continues to offer a competitive cost base – desk space is 75% cheaper per annum per desk than London prices.

And with London just 45 minutes by train, three international airports within an hour's easy reach and quick access to the south coast ports, Basingstoke is a business location option that is impossible to dismiss.

A great place to live

What better advocates for the town than the 96% of residents who agree that the area is a fantastic place to live. And it's easy to see why.

With a range of different homes to suit everyone, both urban and rural, the average house costs £250,000 compared to the £531,000 London price tag. Add to this the endless leisure opportunities –wonderful shopping (160 big brands), truly exciting leisure facilities (skydiving anyone?), a nationally respected concert hall and beautiful English countryside all around – it's no wonder that the area is ranked as one of the best places to live in England.

Key Investment Opportunities:

Basing View

Plans for the town centre 65 acre mixed-use business district include new office and retail space, a business class hotel and other supporting uses - including residential – all in a great environment.

Manydown

This 2,000 acres site is the largest site in local authority hands in the south east. A first phase of development is expected to deliver 3,400 homes alone and there's capacity for up to 8000 homes overall, supported by major infrastructure investment which will also benefit existing residents.

Basingstoke Town Centre

Basingstoke's historic heart in the Top of the Town is being revitalised as a retail area. It is a mixed use area, with retail, service and other small businesses, as well as vibrant nightlife and increasingly residential developments.

Leisure Park

The 63 acre Basingstoke Leisure Park offers 200,000 square feet of leisure and restaurant floor space. A regional draw, especially since the arrival of indoor skydiving centre Airkix, the park is owned by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council. New River Retail is now working with the council to fully explore potential new investors in the park. The aim is to achieve a major step change in the attractions on offer, building on the existing success of the park and revitalising its appeal for the future.

For more information on what Basingstoke has to offer, visit: www.basingstokebiz.com

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Stevenage Central: New regeneration plans unveiled

As the UK's first designated New Town, Stevenage has been an inspiration to the developers behind a wave of post war building across the country. The town of approximately 86,000 is strategically located, 30 miles north of London on the A1M and benefits from strong transport links to Cambridge, Peterborough and London, with a rail journey time to Kings Cross of only 20 minutes.

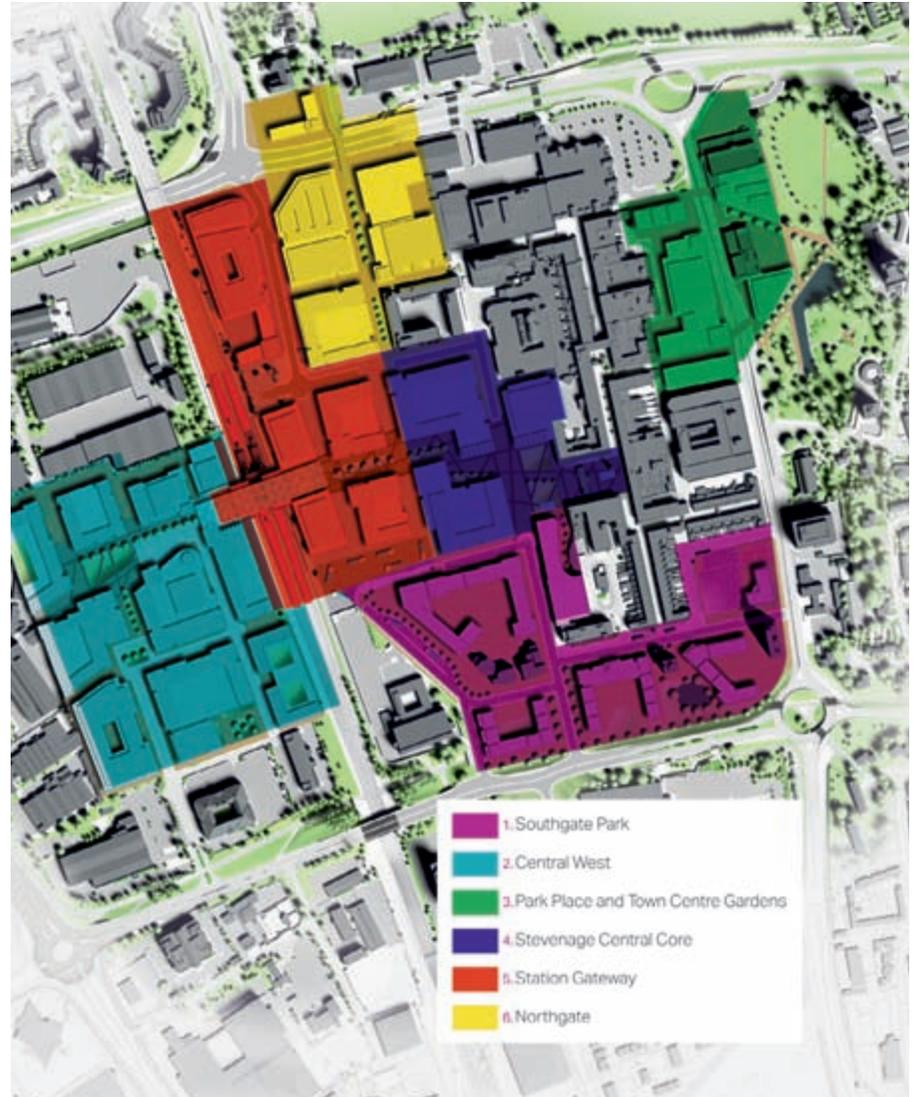
Stevenage is home to a vibrant and diverse business community, ranging from highly skilled world class businesses such as GlaxoSmith Klein, Airbus Defence & Space, Stevenage Bioscience Catalyst and MBDA Missile Systems, to fast growing innovation and technology-led start-ups. It offers a housing market that is affordable, with the average house price being less than half of that found in other edge of London locations. All of these factors combine to make Stevenage an attractive location for public and private sectors to make investments.

In June 2015, Stevenage First, a public-private partnership including Stevenage Borough Council, Hertfordshire County Council, the Chamber of Commerce, the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and Network Rail launched a Town Centre Regeneration

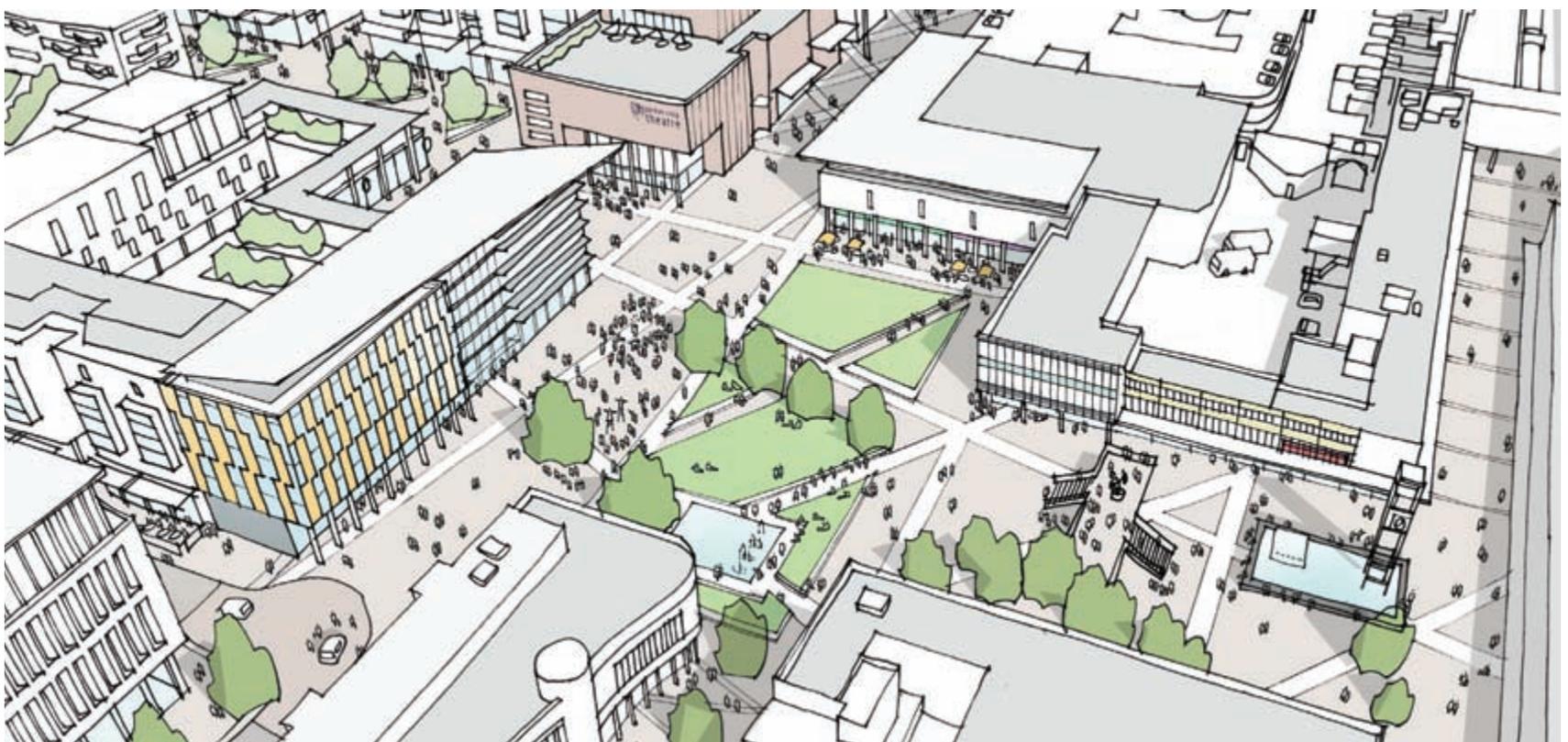
Framework, developed with David Lock Associates. The Framework seeks to create 'oven ready' development sites, as a prerequisite to securing investment. Those sites, in the form of 'Major Opportunity Areas' are shaped to address anticipated market demands and to help draw investment from both the public and private sectors.

The Stevenage Central Framework, sets out a regeneration strategy for the reinvigoration of the centre of Stevenage, to strengthen it as a destination town centre, through a combined retail, leisure and residential offer that will meet the needs of the population, and attract visitors, well into the future. The Framework provides a clear rationale for investors, with a scale of opportunity designed to stimulate development activity. It establishes investment priorities, promotes partnership working and sets the scene for physical interventions over the next twenty five years.

Firm commitment and leadership from the top, across key partners, combined with strong local loyalty to the town, has created a robust platform for changing the function of Central Stevenage, so that it meets the changing needs of all of its users.



View the Stevenage Central Town Centre Regeneration Framework at: www.stevenage.gov.uk/planning/regeneration/131675/





Durdle Door, Dorset, part of the UK's Jurassic Coast

A more mature age profile

The South West attracts many people not just for holidays but to relocate, and its age profile is older than that of the UK as a whole: the rate of net migration from other regions into the South West is relatively high and it has the highest proportion of older people among the regions of England.



From Stonehenge to aerospace – a place of history and engineering

The **South West** is the largest of England's regions and home to some of the most advanced high-tech industry

Dramatic coastlines, wild moors, picturesque villages and one of the UK's biggest ports make the English South West a very varied and alluring region. It includes two popular national parks, Dartmoor and Exmoor, and four World Heritage Sites, including Stonehenge and the 'Jurassic Coast', famous for its fossils.

Covering the counties of Devon and Cornwall in the extreme South West of England, together with Somerset, Dorset, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire and the city of

Bristol, it is the largest English region.

Occupying 23,800km², 18% of the total area of England, it is bigger in area than both Wales and Northern Ireland and has eight cities: Salisbury, Bath, Wells, Bristol, Gloucester, Exeter, Plymouth and Truro.

Latest figures showing the South West had a population of 5.3 million, 8% of the UK total, of whom almost a third live in rural areas, the highest proportion of all the English regions.

This makes it relatively sparsely populated, with a population density

in mid-2012 of 224 people per km², the lowest of all English regions, although higher than that of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

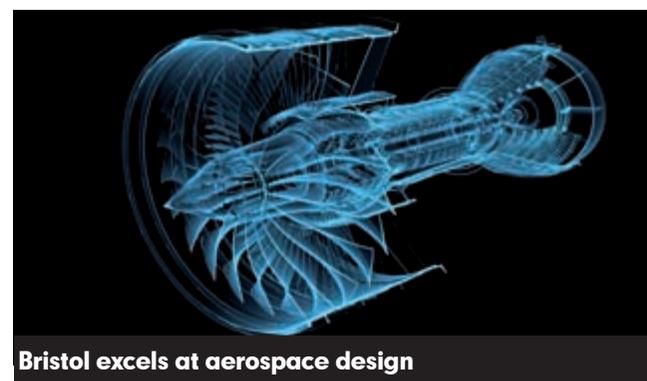
People enjoy a life expectancy among the highest in the country, and economically the region holds up well, responsible for 7.7% of the UK's gross value added – more than £100bn – on the latest figures.

The most economically productive areas within the region are Bristol, the M4 corridor and south east Dorset which are all areas with the best links to London. Bristol alone accounts for a quarter of the region's economy, with the surrounding areas of Gloucestershire, Somerset and Wiltshire accounting for a further quarter.

Bristol's economy has been built on maritime trade, though since the early 20th century aeronautics have taken over as the basis of the city's economy, with several major companies in the sector located in the area.

More recently defence, telecommunications, information technology and electronics have been important industries in Bristol, Swindon and elsewhere.

The region is also economically active, its unemployment rate in 2013 being the joint lowest in the



Bristol excels at aerospace design

UK with the South East at 6.0%, compared with 7.8% for the country as a whole.

Residents are relatively prosperous with gross disposable household income the fourth highest among the English regions, at £16,000 per head in 2011.

However, in April 2012 median gross weekly earnings for full-time adult employees were £477, lower than the UK median of £506.

The region has several universities including those at Bristol, Plymouth, Bath and Bournemouth, and the percentage of the region's population aged 16 to 64 with no qualifications in 2012 was 7.0%, the second lowest proportion in the UK after the South East, and compared

with 9.9% for the UK.

The region lies on several main line railways, notably the Great Western Main Line running from London to Bristol, Exeter, Plymouth and Penzance in the far west of Cornwall and the South Western Main Line from London and Southampton to Bournemouth, Poole and Weymouth.

Three major roads enter the region from the east, including the M4 motorway from London to South Wales via Bristol and the M5 from the West Midlands through Gloucestershire, Bristol and Somerset to Exeter.

Passenger airports include Bristol, Exeter, Newquay and Bournemouth.

Top performing areas in the South West plus their costs

Rank	District	Business location index score	National Rank (out of 324)	Cost score	National Rank (out of 324)
1	Bristol	116.27	20	108.03	84
2	Wiltshire	111.29	32	90.04	164
3	S Glos	109.45	52	104.87	103
4	Swindon	108.24	61	99.55	121
5	Bath & NE Somerset	106.19	75	107.24	92

Source: Grant Thornton Grant Thornton Business Location Index

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Good value housing

Housing is relatively good value compared to the rest of the country. The average house price in the West Midlands in June 2013 was £184,000, higher than in any of the northern regions or the East Midlands but substantially lower than the south of England and well below the UK average of £242,000.

Apart from Birmingham, the main cities and towns in the West Midlands include Coventry, Hereford, Shrewsbury, Stafford, Stoke-on-Trent, Telford, Wolverhampton and Worcester.

There are nine universities: Aston, Birmingham City, Coventry, Keele, Staffordshire, University of Birmingham, University of Warwick, University of Wolverhampton and University of Worcester, as well as three university colleges.



A region at the heart of England

A proud industrial heritage, a long-established manufacturing base and a young population are among the strengths of one of England's two land-locked regions

The West Midlands can claim to be the place where it all started back in the 18th century in what became known as the Industrial Revolution.

Today, visitors can tour sites such as Iron Bridge which celebrate the skill and vision of those early pioneers.

Birmingham, the urban centre of the West Midlands, is known as Britain's second city and was once the world's greatest industrial metropolis.

The city has undergone a renaissance in recent years and now boasts a range of ambitious architectural and environmental developments, museums and industrial heritage sites.

Large areas of the West Midlands are sparsely populated, however, and with attractive scenery and the 'Shakespeare Country' centred on the Bard's birthplace, Stratford-upon-



Avon, there is much to draw the discerning visitor.

Along with London it is one of

the only two land-locked regions in England, occupying 13,000km², 5% of the total area of the UK.

It has a population of 5.6 million according to the latest census, almost 9% of the UK total, with a density of 434 people per km² – close to the England average.

It is a relatively urbanised region – Birmingham and the surrounding conurbation has one of the lowest proportions of its population living in rural areas at 15.1% compared with 17.6% in England as a whole.

And, it is a relatively young place – latest figures show that under-16s make up 19.5% of the population, one of the highest regional percentages in England.

Nevertheless, the proportion of the working age population with no qualifications is the highest in England on the latest figures at 13.6% compared with 9.5% for England.

The West Midlands generated 7% of the UK's economic output in 2011, although the unemployment rate was one of the highest at 9.9% compared with 7.8% for both England and the UK and 10.3% in the North East.

Historically, employment in the West Midlands has been dominated by manufacturing, including major car-makers, and although employment in the sector has substantially declined, it still accounts for around one in 10 of the workforce.

Earnings are lower than the countrywide average with gross disposable household income of £14,400 per head in 2011 compared with £16,000 for the UK.

In April 2012, median gross weekly earnings for full-time adult employees were £469, lower than

the UK median of £506.

The West Midlands' location in the heart of England means it is well connected to other parts of the country, making it one of the most accessible regions, linked to the North and South, East and West by rail and road networks.

The West Midlands is also home to Birmingham International Airport, the second largest in England outside of the London area, serving more than 180 destinations in Europe, North America, Asia and the Middle East, and handling over 9.5 million passengers in 2008.

The National Exhibition Centre (NEC) in Solihull, adjacent to Birmingham International Airport and Birmingham International Railway station, is the largest exhibition centre in the UK, with 21 inter-connected halls.

Top performing areas in the West Midlands plus their costs					
Rank	District	Business location index score	National Rank (out of 324)	Cost score	National Rank (out of 324)
1	Birmingham	122.65	12	93.55	146
2	Warwick	106.92	68	105.73	98
3	Solihull	103.93	98	119.39	54
4	Coventry	103.25	104	96.00	133
5	Stratford-upon-Avon	102.79	108	105.38	101

Source: Grant Thornton Business Location Index

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UK Central is one of the most compelling inward investment locations in the UK, offering a powerful combination of opportunity, connectivity and lifestyle.

UK Central encompasses the cosmopolitan town of Solihull, Birmingham Airport and the National Exhibition Centre campus, the planned High Speed Rail Interchange, Jaguar Land Rover and several world class business parks.

An attractive combination of rural villages and urban centres, the area was rated the best place to live in the UK. Accessible to 35 million people in the UK within a two hour travel time, as well as an extensive route network of business and leisure destinations across the globe, UK Central is already a powerful engine for growth and boasts one of the strongest economies outside London.

UK Central offers investors an area rich in talent and skills. Five world class universities, together with a range of schools and colleges with close links to business,



UK Central is already a powerful engine for growth and boasts one of the strongest economies outside London.

ensure that businesses can access the skills they need for the workforce of the future. Digital connectivity also underpins business growth in key locations across UK Central.

Core business sector strengths include advanced manufacturing, building technologies, professional business services, aerospace, ICT, retail and leisure as well as a range of low carbon industries. UK Central is already home to Jaguar Land Rover, the National Exhibition Centre, the £150m Genting Resorts World Birmingham leisure destination and a host of other major brands including Arup, IMI plc, National Grid, Oracle, Siemens, Fujitsu and Balfour Beatty.

The UK Central offer comprises four interconnected opportunity zones designed to maximise Solihull's role as a powerhouse of the regional economy. Investment opportunities include:

Zone 1- 'The Hub' -flexible leisure, events and entertainment space around the NEC, alongside development land at Birmingham Airport and Birmingham Business Park.

Zone 2 -A £1.8Bn regeneration programme in North Solihull with significant opportunities for housing, retail and leisure development

Zone 3- Solihull Town Centre - a major retail, leisure and office destination

Zone 4 - Blythe Valley Park, a master planned business park campus in a countryside setting.

As the High Speed 2 project rapidly becomes a reality, the UK Central team is working closely with Government and the property sector to maximise the development potential of the proposed HS2 Interchange. A 140 hectare site will connect with the existing opportunities within UKC Hub, attracting inward investment, creating an internationally competitive business destination and develop into a well-planned and sustainable garden city for the 21st century.



Premier inward investment opportunities in the centre of the UK



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The region of Yorkshire and the Humber acts as a bridge between the North of England and the Midlands.

It consists of South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire, the East Riding of Yorkshire (including Hull), the shire county of North Yorkshire and the city of York itself.

The region also includes North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire. It does not include nearby Middlesbrough, Redcar or Cleveland, which are all part of the North East of England region.

Covering more than 15,000 km², it is the fifth largest region in England.

Yorkshire and the Humber has a population of 5.2 million – larger than Scotland.

The largest cities in the region are Leeds and Sheffield. Leeds is one of the fastest growing cities in the UK with a population of 771,000.

Scattered around the region are also Doncaster, Bradford, Kingston-upon-Hull, Rotherham and Grimsby, which all have populations of around 100,000.

But the majority of people (80%) live in urban areas with populations of more than 10,000.

The latest figures for Yorkshire and the Humber from the RBS Regional Growth Tracker (October 2015) show that Wakefield, Calderdale and Kirklees and North Yorkshire all grew at a rate of 2.5% to 3%, during the second quarter of 2015.

For Wakefield, that has meant a 1.8% point drop in its unemployment rate.

‘It has been a positive few months for the Yorkshire and Humber region, and this has been backed by a business environment which has shown continued resilience,’ said RBS regional enterprise manager, Hannah Waters.

‘The leisure and hospitality industry has played a significant role in both cities and rural communities across the region.’

The region’s coastline plays an important part in the local economy. Associated British Port’s



The single-span Humber suspension bridge opened to traffic in 1981. It is the seventh-longest of its kind in the world

Ports contribute £2.2bn a year to UK economy

Yorkshire and Humberside form the bridge between the Midlands and the North of England and their largest cities – Leeds and Sheffield – are the fastest growing in the UK

facilities on the Humber – Hull, Goole, Grimsby and Immingham – contribute £2.2bn to the UK economy every year.

The Humber ports support 33,000 jobs, handle more than 65 million tonnes of cargo and provide strong trading links with mainland Europe and Scandinavia. And in 2017, Hull will be home to one of the UK’s largest port developments; a £310m Green Port Hull project with Siemens.

The Grimsby Institute and the Humber LEP are jointly funding

a new £7m centre of excellence for the ports, energy and logistics sectors (see panel).

‘Logistics are vital to supporting the Humber’s growing renewables sector, as a source of new career opportunities and in consolidating our status as the UK’s Energy Estuary,’ said Humber LEP vice chair, Mike Parker.

The York, North Yorkshire and East Riding LEP recently welcomed figures that show private sector employment rose by 17,200 in 2014.

According to the Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES), public sector employment in the same period fell by an estimated 4,800 meaning net jobs growth of 12,400 for the area.

The York, North Yorkshire and East Riding LEP economy grew by faster than national average in 2012 and 2013

with 6.1% growth and claimants of out of work benefits are at their lowest levels ever.

The sector with the strongest figures for jobs growth was the accommodation and food sector with 19.3% more jobs in 2014

than 2013.

Information and communication employment also increased significantly with 18.9% growth.

The financial and insurance industry and the construction industry also performed well with 17% and 11% respectively.

The best performing areas of the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding LEP were Ryedale with 1,400 more jobs (a 5.4% increase), East Riding with an increase in employment of 3,800 (a 3.2% increase) and York with an increase of 2,900 jobs (2.8% increase).

But it’s not all work, work, work! Tourism in Yorkshire and the Humber is worth over £7bn, which is more than the whole tourism expenditure in Ireland or Denmark.

Around 216 million visits to Yorkshire are made every year, which is equivalent to the total number of visitors to Walt Disney Attraction Theme Parks worldwide. And that’s not a ‘Mickey Mouse’ statistic’.



Logistics for UK’s energy estuary

Modal Training will be based in tailor-made facilities in Immingham, North East Lincolnshire.

Equipped with simulators for training maritime crew, truck and crane drivers, it will deliver realistic training, replicating the working environment in a wide range of settings.

‘Logistics are vital to supporting the Humber’s growing renewables sector, as a source of new career opportunities and in consolidating our status as the UK’s Energy Estuary,’ said Humber LEP vice chair, Mike Parker.

Top performing areas in Yorkshire & Humberside plus their costs					
Rank	District	Business location index score	National Rank (out of 324)	Cost score	National Rank (out of 324)
1	Leeds	122.38	13	98.97	124
2	Sheffield	112.17	28	89.21	177
3	York	103.75	99	105.00	102
4	Calderdale	102.44	111	81.44	244
5	Harrogate	102.03	119	91.96	159

Source: Grant Thornton Business Location Index

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A growing population and high-speed links to the capital

With attractions ranging from the Peak District to Robin Hood's Sherwood Forest, a strong manufacturing sector and good transport links, the **East Midlands** is a great place to do business

The East Midlands offers visitors a wonderful variety of attractions ranging from the scenic Peak District and Lincolnshire Wolds to the coastal resort of Skegness and several historic cities such as Nottingham, Lincoln and Derby.

The North West of the region is dominated by the southern part of the Pennines forming the Peak District National Park which welcomes 22 million visits a year – almost a third of all visits to national parks in England.

The region is also notable for its forests: Sherwood Forest, home of the legendary Robin Hood in Nottinghamshire, and the newly-developing National Forest, mainly located in Leicestershire.

It is the fourth largest English region with an area of 15,600km² covering 12% of the total area of England and comprises the five counties of Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire and Nottinghamshire.

Industries including coal mining and the textile industry are no longer the feature they once were, but the manufacturing sector is still a major force and makes the highest contribution to the regional economy.

As a proportion of total regional output, manufacturing is greater in the East Midlands than in any other part of the UK.

Agriculture is more important in the flatter lowlands to the South and East of the region and the East Midlands has the highest proportion of agricultural land of all UK regions.

More than 6% of the UK's economic output was generated in the East Midlands according to the latest figures.

The unemployment rate was 7.9%, close to the UK average. In April 2012, median gross weekly earnings for full-time adult employees in the East Midlands were £477, lower than the UK median of £506 but substantially above the North East and Yorkshire and The Humber figures.

The latest figures estimate the population of the East Midlands



Trams pass the Council House – also known as city hall – in the Old Market Square, Nottingham

at 4.4 million, 7.2% of the UK total, and it is projected to grow at a faster rate than any other English region over the next 25 years.

Nevertheless, it is relatively sparsely populated, with a population density of only 282 people per km², the lowest for any English region, apart from the South West. The local authority area with the smallest population is Rutland, with an estimated 38,400 residents.

The projected population increase is not spread evenly across the region, so the pressure to build affordable houses to meet demand is not uniform.

There was a 0.9% increase in

house prices in the East Midlands in the year to June 2013, compared with 3.1% for the UK as a whole. This was higher than the more northern regions and the South West, but lower than London and the surrounding regions.

The area is well served for higher education with Bishop Grosseteste University College, Lincoln, the University of Derby, De Montfort University, Leicester University, the University of Lincoln, Loughborough University, the University of Northampton, Nottingham Trent University and Nottingham University.

Between them, they had around



High speed trains head for London

149,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students at the last count, 6.5% of the total in the UK.

The region, particularly the North and West, is well served by transport links.

East Midlands Airport in Leicestershire is situated between the three main cities of Derby, Leicester and Nottingham.

There are high-speed trains to London with connections to the West Midlands and the South West.

The M1 motorway runs through a large part of the area and serves the three largest conurbations.

Top performing areas in the East Midlands plus their costs					
Rank	District	Business location index score	National Rank (out of 324)	Cost score	National Rank (out of 324)
1	Nottingham	106.84	70	87.37	191
2	Rushcliffe	105.97	77	88.04	183
3	Derby City	105.43	82	102.27	110
4	S Northants	104.26	95	96.53	131
5	Northampton	102.13	118	91.17	162

Source: Grant Thornton Business Location Index

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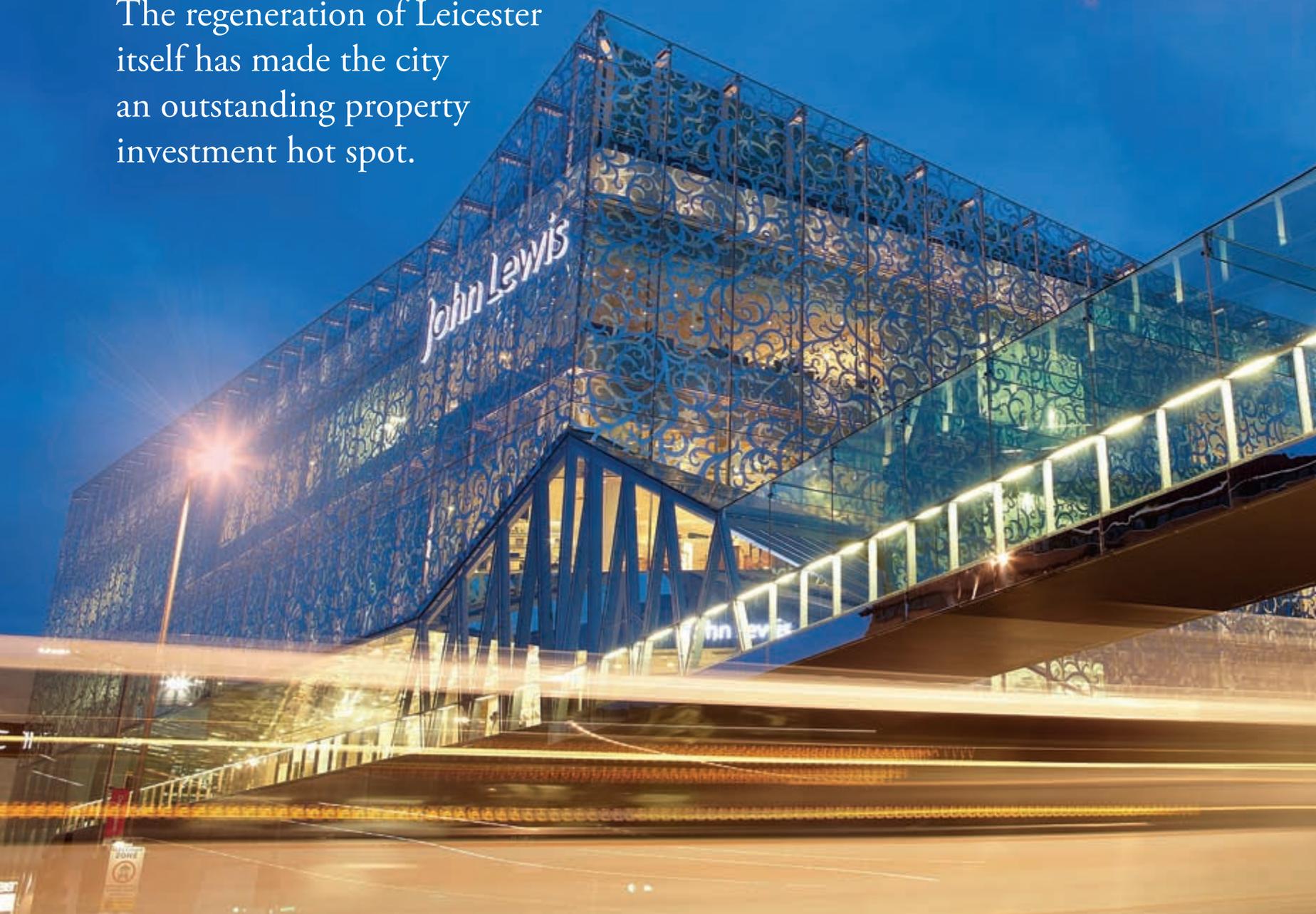
How the East Midlands fares for cost and quality of offering			
High quality/High cost	High quality/Low cost	Low quality/High cost	Low quality/Low cost
4	6	1	29

East Midlands: Only 10 East Midlands districts are classified as 'High quality' business locations. However, a number of these locations in and around Nottingham, Leicester and Derby also score well in terms of affordability

Source: Grant Thornton Business Location Index

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Leicester is a place with big ideas and even bigger ambitions. It is a place where businesses thrive and grow. The regeneration of Leicester itself has made the city an outstanding property investment hot spot.



Leicester is a place with big ideas and even bigger ambitions. It is a place where businesses thrive and grow. The regeneration of Leicester itself has made the city an outstanding property investment hot spot.

'Connecting Leicester' is a £19 million project that aims to improve the connections between shopping, leisure, housing, and transport facilities, all linked by accessible high quality pedestrian routes. The public realm scheme will aid in showcasing what Leicester has to offer, from heritage through to culture and retail.

The project is transforming key destinations and unlocking private sector investment jobs. These changes are building the confidence and pride of Leicester's people – you don't have to travel very far around Leicester to feel the ambition in the air, both in how companies do business and how we work in partnership to explore what's possible.

The first wave of 'Connecting Leicester' has mainly involved the reconstruction of large areas of the city centre. To date, we have spent £5.6m on highways improvements – these schemes have provided high quality facilities for pedestrians and cyclists alike.

In March 2015, the reinterment of King Richard III into Leicester Cathedral took place. This major event brought tens of thousands of visitors from around the globe to Leicester Cathedral and surrounding historical sites during the week of reinterment activities.

Over 25,000 people visited the Cathedral for a glimpse of the former monarch's coffin and tomb, and more than 10,000 visitors went to Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre.

The discovery of King Richard III brought in more than £59 million to Leicester's economy, from the time of the discovery to the reinterment. It is estimated that around £4.5 million of this was generated

in the week of activities. The events were a spectacular success, and involved joint working across the City and County Councils, and with external partners such as the King Richard III Visitor Centre. The result won Leicester priceless publicity and exposure.

Less than two years have passed since Leicester City Council purchased an old school building with the aim of creating a centre that would tell the story of the remarkable search for King Richard III. The former school – a stunning Victorian Gothic revival building built partly on the site of the former Grey Friars Church and in the heart of Leicester's Old Town – has now undergone major renovations which have completely transformed the 150-year old building into the home of a state-of-the-art visitor centre, whilst retaining the character and features of the former school. Opened last year, the centre tells the fascinating and moving story of the king's

life and death, and reveals one of the greatest archaeological detective stories ever told, using great storytelling, beautiful design and 21st century technology. In January 2015, the Visitor Centre was named as one of the world's hottest new attractions for 2015 in the Lonely Planet guide. It has additionally won East Midlands RIBA awards, Project of the Year at the RICs East Midlands Awards and Construction News – Project of the Year (under £10M).

Our new £2.5 million project, Cathedral Gardens, is now open to the public, and the beautiful gardens provide an attractive open space framing Leicester Cathedral as they connect up with adjoining St Martin's House and Leicester's medieval Guildhall. A focal point in the gardens is a new sculpture called Towards Stillness, which expresses the moments before, during and after the final journey of King Richard III from Bosworth to Leicester. Pride of place has been given to a statue of King Richard III, which was

with the old town. Historical gems such as Leicester Cathedral, Jewry Wall, Wygston's House, the Guildhall, Leicester Castle, and St Nicholas Church are all close by.

The final stages of work to create Leicester's £4 million Jubilee Square has been marked by the planting of ten large trees including five freeman maples, each standing around 7m high and weighing about four tonnes, three Indian bean trees, each around 6m high, and two snowy mespilus.

The schemes have won RICS East Midlands Awards and been shortlisted for the RTPI National Awards, Placemaking Awards and the RICS National Awards.

As part of the wider programme of works, High Cross Street and Applegate have been revamped and St Nicholas Circle is being redeveloped. As well as this, Peacock Lane

quality food manufacturing space and enable new and innovative food businesses to start up and grow. Leicester has an abundance of craft and artisan producers, and this new development will provide them with the space they need. Leicester Food Park opened its gates in November 2014 and has a significant tenant presence.

Dock is Leicester's hub for high tech, low carbon and innovative businesses, and is located next to the iconic Space Centre. This managed workspace at Pioneer Park is an inspirational development centre for knowledge economy businesses, and offers a range of workspaces including office, lab and workshop space for up to 55 businesses. The onsite business development team supports tenants' business growth needs.

We also have some fantastic projects

- A multi-million pound new estate development plan to deliver a state-of-the-art campus at the heart of Leicester's Educational Quarter. This includes the largest investment in medical education at any UK university in the past decade.

Leicester is home to three highly successful clubs – Leicester Tigers, Leicester Riders basketball team; and Leicester City Football Club. After finishing 14th in their first year of returning to the Premier League last season, the Club is looking to improve on these standings this season and continue its rapid growth and popularity across the globe. The Club currently boasts 10 senior international players within its first team squad and was recently ranked as the 42nd richest brand in world football.

More businesses are choosing Leicester as their base to expand and grow, nationally and internationally, and we have recently secured multi-million pound investment from some great companies.

One of these is world-renowned technology giant IBM, who worked closely with us for many months and considered a number of other locations across the UK, before announcing at the beginning of this year that they would be opening their first UK Services Centre in Leicester. The centre will create 300 jobs over three years, enabling IBM to extend its technology services to UK-based clients. IBM Services Centre: Leicester, will be based on New Walk in the heart of the city, and will employ graduates and experienced professionals who have technical backgrounds or who show an aptitude for IT and want to pursue a career in the industry. It will also offer internships and apprenticeships to harness the best talent from across the city and region. IBM is working with local universities and educational institutions to recruit for the positions – the company has appointed 86 staff to date, and soon expect to hit 100.

The main reason the company gave for choosing Leicester was the quality of graduates from the city and county's three universities. It is hoped that IBM's decision to choose Leicester will encourage other businesses to set up in the city too.

Hastings Direct, one of the UK's fastest growing insurance firms, announced in March this year that they had chosen Leicester to set up their third UK customer service centre, and the project will play a significant role in their plans for growth and expansion.

The operation went live in the city in May 2015, with Hastings recruiting a mix of team leaders and customer service workers. Since then, they have created 150 jobs in Leicester, and plan to create hundreds more. They are aiming to debut on the UK stock market later this year as part of plans to rapidly expand and enable continued growth.



IBM & Hastings have been impressed with the calibre of staff they have recruited here and are both celebrating the fact that their projects are ahead of schedule.

Leicester is investing in its future and is proud to do so. The city council is committed to improving and creating a high-quality environment for residents, visitors and businesses to enjoy and benefit from.



will be enhanced through new paving, improved public realm and restricted access for vehicles.

Leicester City Council is investing £13.5 million in the ambitious project to build a new, larger, and more efficient bus station on the site of the existing Haymarket Bus Station. The new station will provide more capacity for local bus services, with 11 additional stands which will allow 23 buses to drop off or pick up at any one time. Bus services that currently use nearby on-street bus stops will be relocated into the new bus station, which will significantly reduce bus queuing and congestion in the area.

It will feature an attractive new concourse building which will provide modern facilities and the latest information systems for bus passengers. Roof-mounted solar panels will help provide power for the building and to charge mobility scooters at the Shopmobility centre which will be based in the new building.

There will also be a number of improvements to make the area around the bus station more attractive. The footpath opposite the new station will be widened and reconstructed with high-quality block paving. New seating and decorative glass screens will be installed, along with the planting of a number of new trees.

Towards the north-east of the city sits the £5.8m Leicester Food Park. Located on a 1.5 acre site, it forms part of the Victoria Heights Industrial Estate. Leicester Food Park was commissioned by Leicester City Council, and is managed by the East Midlands Chamber working in partnership with The Food & Drink Forum. Its three steel-framed buildings – developed close to a business park off Lewisher Road – house nine excellent units, ranging in size from 1,000 to 5,000 sq. ft., which provide high-

quality food manufacturing space and enable new and innovative food businesses to start up and grow. Leicester has an abundance of craft and artisan producers, and this new development will provide them with the space they need. Leicester Food Park opened its gates in November 2014 and has a significant tenant presence.

Waterside will be home to high quality housing, smaller office and high value light commercial space, independent retailers, and leisure uses. New infrastructure and investment in public realm, open spaces, and innovative lighting schemes will help make Waterside a unique and highly desirable new neighbourhood for the city.

Along with Waterside, the comprehensive redevelopment of New Walk Centre – a key city centre site, and the City Council's former headquarters – will provide an exciting and vibrant mixed use scheme including 61,000 sq. ft. of grade A offices, 11,500 sq. ft. of retail & restaurant space, 71 private apartments, 150 secure parking spaces, and public open spaces. Planning permission has been secured and construction is anticipated to commence late 2015.

The University of Leicester has recently announced a transformative plan to create a university that represents a 'distinctive elite' in the higher education sector.

The multi-million pound plans include:

- The creation of a National Space Park to show how universities can bring together cutting-edge science, industry, education, and training. The National Space Park will drive innovation in space and Earth observation science. It will be home to the university's world-class space and earth observation scientists and will play a crucial role in attracting high-tech companies to the city

moved from Castle Gardens. The new location is closer to the last Plantagenet king's final resting place and is opposite the King Richard III Visitor Centre.

Jubilee Square is a new open area with large lawns with hard landscaping in St Nicholas Circle, at the west end of the city's busy retail centre. It incorporates hard-standing areas large enough to accommodate a Ferris wheel or ice-rink at Christmas, and is used as a venue for outdoor events and festivals – recently, it housed one of the large screens used to show King Richard III's reinterment ceremony, attracting hundreds of visitors.

There is seating and architectural lighting which show off features of the buildings fronting the new square, including Wygston's House, the oldest complete timber-framed building in the city.

The High Cross sits on the square, close to its original position, where it would have been at the very centre of the medieval town.

The space links the modern city centre



The region generated nearly 9% of the UK's economic output in 2011, and the unemployment rate was lower than the national average at 6.5% in 2013 compared with 7.8% for the UK

The Fens, along with the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads, are eye-catching and popular attractions to visitors to the region

Where timeless scenery meets the modern world

From Fenland to state-of-the-art science parks, the **East of England** offers the best of Britain today

With its beautiful coastline, unspoilt countryside, historic cities and fascinating heritage, the East of England has a unique character all its own – and a proud place in high-tech modern Britain.

Comprising mainly flat, low-lying land abutting the North Sea, the East of England has an extensive coastline, 121 kilometres of which are designated as heritage coast. It includes the Fens in the central northern part of the region and the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads as well as several large forests, all popular with visitors.

It is the second largest English region by area at 19,100 square kilometres, covering 8% of the UK total, with a diverse make-up combining predominantly built-up areas in Essex, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire with scattered towns in Cambridgeshire and Suffolk and the mainly rural area of northern Norfolk.

Within easy reach of London, the region provides an important gateway to Britain from Europe.

According to the latest census

the region had a population of 5.9 million at mid-2012, 9% of the UK total, of whom 28.9% lived in rural areas, one of the highest regional proportions.

Population density on the latest figures was 309 people per square kilometre, below the England average of 411 but above the UK average of 263. In mid-2012, the median age of the region's residents was 41.0 years, above the UK figure of 39.7 years.

The region generated nearly 9% of the UK's economic output in 2011, and the unemployment rate was lower than the national average at 6.5% in 2013 compared

with 7.8% for the UK, while the employment rate for the same period was among the highest in the UK at 75.5%.

Around 20% the UK's cereal farms are in the East of England, a region characterised by large expanses of arable land with crops ranging from high intensity cereal production to labour intensive vegetable production in the Fens.

Sugar beet is also grown in large quantities with much of the UK's sugar production based in Suffolk and Norfolk.

Earnings are higher than the national average. In April 2012, median gross weekly earnings for

full-time adult employees were £531 compared with £506 in the UK as a whole, though gross disposable household income of £16,600 per head in 2011 was only just higher than the UK average of £16,000.

House prices in the East of England were slightly above the England average in June 2013, but the annual increase was lower than the average for the country.

The region is home to six universities. The University of Cambridge is one of the world's most ancient and prestigious centres of learning, and with a strong science and IT offering it is

the centre of a thriving commercial high-tech community of science parks and entrepreneurial start-ups.

Other universities are East Anglia, Essex, Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Anglia Ruskin, based on three main campuses in Cambridge, Chelmsford and Peterborough.

Nevertheless, levels of education in the region vary widely. The highest proportion of people outside London with qualifications of degree level or above is in Cambridge and St Albans.

Yet according to the latest figures Great Yarmouth had the lowest proportion of people in England and Wales with qualifications of degree level or above at just 14 per cent. Overall, 23% of people aged 16 and over had no recognised qualification.

Proximity to London provides visitors with relatively easy access by road and rail and there are scheduled flights from all major European airports to Stansted and Luton airports.

The port of Harwich has links with Holland, Germany and Denmark.

Top performing areas in the Eastern Region plus their costs

Rank	District	Business location index score	National Rank (out of 324)	Cost score	National Rank (out of 324)
1	Cambridge	127.57	6	146.02	18
2	S Cambs	126.54	8	131.76	32
3	Watford	116.96	19	130.94	35
4	E Herts	111.44	30	112.65	69
5	St Albans	109.11	53	131.47	33

Source: Grant Thornton Business Location Index

© Grant Thornton



A new Vision for Ipswich



As a cultural and sporting hub, Ipswich has a great buzz to attract young experienced staff

- If moving from London, staff can rent/buy housing at around half of London prices, while gaining space to grow their families in a safe and attractive environment
- Population of 137,000, one of the fastest growing in the East of England, with a very young profile, where 47% are younger than 35, and 7% are under five
- University Campus Suffolk (UCS) on the Waterfront is the UK's youngest university, only 18-60 miles from universities in Cambridge, Chelmsford, Colchester and Norwich; with UCS, that regional student population is 108,000
- ICT companies and universities benefit from BT's Global R&D HQ nearby (3,700 employees,

including BT and 70 co-located High Tech companies at Adastral Park). Operations in Ipswich are cost effective:

- A realistic place for London-based businesses to grow in a cost-effective environment, with at least a 30% reduction in skilled staff costs and occupation costs, reduced staff turnover with lower recruitment and re-training costs

Ipswich is well connected:

- Data communications: Ipswich has the UK's 12th highest Superfast Broadband penetration rate.
- By train: Just over an hour to London Liverpool Street
- By car: 54 miles to the M25, 45/60 miles to Stansted, Cambridge, Norwich and Southend airports

- 10 miles to Felixstowe, the UK's largest container port, while Ipswich Port itself is the UK's largest agricultural port

Many people move to Ipswich

- Superb quality of life, parks, events, Waterfront, marinas, sport, unspoilt countryside and seaside nearby.

'Adastral Park is BT's Global Engineering Headquarters - I moved to BT at Adastral Park after university 27 years ago and have never found a good enough reason to leave'

Dr Tim Whitley, Managing Director, BT Research & Innovation and Adastral Park

Ipswich - your sort of town ...



Ipswich has much to offer and if you would like to come and see for yourself we will roll out the red carpet for you and your team.



The Inward Investment Team at Ipswich Borough Council can provide the following, all at no cost to you:

- Site/property short-listing
- Access to the Council's network to assist hiring service providers (lawyers, telcos, property, banks and recruitment)
- Access to advisors for corporate tax advice
- Access to planning authorities
- Introductions to similar companies
- Networking with the local business community
- Introductions to local market opportunities
- Sourcing of résumés
- Introductions to careers offices in major universities and colleges
- Introduction to academic research expertise
- Introduction to schools and their senior staff
- PR announcements to aid recruitment
- Access to export support services

SEE US AT STAND E30

For more information contact:
 Richard Hendron,
 Inward Investment Manager,
 Ipswich Borough Council
 e: richard.hendron@ipswich.gov.uk
 Direct line: 01473 432922



The Powerhouse of England's North



Manchester city centre: more resources will be given to Greater Manchester as part of the devolution of power to the North

As the region of England that gave the world the Beatles and Manchester United, the **North West** is a powerhouse industrially and culturally

The North West consists of the five counties – Cheshire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Merseyside.

It is the third most heavily populated region in the UK (7.1 million), after the South East and London and has grown by 0.4% over the last decade.

The latest figures from the RBS Regional Growth Tracker (published in October) show the North West economy was the UK's equal second fastest growing region after London during the second quarter of 2015.

There was a growth of 0.6%

in the North West, alongside the South West and South East.

Warrington's economy, according to the growth tracker, was out in front again in the North West with growth of 3.2% year-on-year, while Greater Manchester grew by 2.6%.

'The economy in the North West continues to thrive and expand, and much of this is supported by the diverse business environment in the region. The media and tech industries are at the forefront of the region's start-up culture,' says RBS regional enterprise manager, Heather Waters.

In 2013, the North West generated £141.6bn in gross value added (GVA), making it the third highest figure out of the 12 UK standard regions and countries.

The per head figure in the North West at £19,937 was just 85.2% of the UK average, while London, the most prosperous region, had a GVA of £40,215 per head or 171.9% of the UK average.

Just on their own, the 10 local authorities of Greater Manchester – Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford, and Wigan – represent the largest functional economic area outside London, with a population of 2.7 million and gross value added (GVA) of £56bn.

According to the latest figures from the Office for National Statistics, the Greater Manchester area experienced the highest growth rate in 2013 of all the Local Enterprise Partnership areas in England. The 4.6% growth rate exceeded both London (4%) and Birmingham (4.3%).

Greater Manchester's continued growth has not gone unnoticed in Westminster and last year, chancellor George Osborne announced plans to devolve

more power and resources to Greater Manchester as part of his 'Northern Powerhouse' initiative.

Under the settlement, a directly-elected mayor will be created and the Greater Manchester Combined Authority will gain new powers around transport, planning and housing.

The area is also benefiting from the continued success of Manchester Airport, which handled approximately 22 million passengers in 2014. In the final month of that year (December), the airport saw more than 1.4 million passengers walk through its doors.

The city of Liverpool needs little introduction, particularly to music fans and football fans the world over. With a population of more than 466,000, the city is one of the largest in the country. No wonder *Rough Guide* stated Liverpool was in the 'top three cities in the world' to visit in 2014.

The number of business in Liverpool is at a five year high, with 14,215 business units recorded in the city in 2014, with 2,250 firms being launched in 2013.

And the Liverpool Cruise Terminal has earned a reputation as one of the most desirable cruise destinations in Europe.

Centrally placed in the Irish Sea, it has proved to be an ideal starting point for North European and Norwegian Fjord cruises.

Named after one of the city's most famous sons, Liverpool John Lennon Airport in 2014 welcomed almost 4 million passengers in 2014 and the city centre's new retail and leisure development, Liverpool One recorded a footfall of more than 27 million people in 2014.

Away from Liverpool and Manchester, the region is also home to a multitude of cities and towns, including Blackpool, Lancaster and Rochdale.

The region also boasts several major universities, including Liverpool John Moores, the University of Manchester and Lancaster University.

And the latest government figures show 1,140 new homes being built in Lancashire in the three months up to August. That figure compares with 1,100 new homes Greater Manchester over the same time period, 670 in Cheshire, 430 in the Liverpool city region and 400 in Cumbria.

With more powers and government funding heading to the North West, the sky is the limit for the region.

Top performing areas in the North West plus their costs

Rank	District	Business location index score	National Rank (out of 324)	Cost score	National Rank (out of 324)
1	Manchester	119.01	17	108.08	85
2	Trafford	113.05	24	105.84	97
3	Cheshire East	110.75	41	95.58	136
4	Liverpool	108.31	60	95.67	135
5	Stockport	106.64	71	92.82	151

Source: Grant Thornton Business Location Index

© Grant Thornton



Invest in Trafford: The engine room of the Northern Powerhouse.

With the highest productivity per head in Greater Manchester, over 11,000 successful businesses and a highly skilled workforce, Trafford in Greater Manchester is the economic engine room of the Northern Powerhouse.

Trafford is home to Trafford Park, the first planned industrial estate in the world. Opened in 1896, its location on the banks of the Manchester Ship Canal made the development the ideal location of choice for businesses and industry.

Today, 120 years later, Trafford Park remains one of the largest and most successful industrial estates in Europe - now home to over 1,300 businesses and 35,000 employees. On the doorstep of both Manchester City Centre and MediaCityUK, Trafford Park

offers enviable transport connectivity, with easy access to the M6, M60, and M61 motorways; the North West's largest inland rail freight terminal; the thriving Manchester Ship Canal; and the international Manchester Airport on the doorstep. Well-known brands and visitor attractions located in Trafford Park include: Kellogg's, L'Oreal, Regatta, Missguided, intu Trafford Centre, ITV Coronation Street and Imperial War Museum North. The area is also the proud home to Manchester United's Old Trafford Football Ground and Lancashire County Cricket Club.

As the area continues to attract new investment, and development land across Greater Manchester becomes harder to secure, a flagship new opportunity is on the horizon. Carrington is identified as a key

strategic location for growth and is one of the largest development opportunities in Greater Manchester. With the potential to deliver 750,000 sq.m of logistics accommodation, 17,500 sq.m of office space and up to 5,000 residential units, Carrington will play a key role in maintaining Trafford's position as the engine room of the Northern Powerhouse and acting as the catalyst for sustainable growth and investment.

Beyond Trafford Park and Carrington, Trafford also boasts four town centres, an excellent residential offer, and schools consistently ranked amongst the best in the country.

A recent report by Savills estate agency praised Trafford's ability to attract new businesses, highlighting a 37% increase in 'golden sector' businesses (Professional,

scientific and technical; information and communication; and financial and insurance) in the past five years. The report identifies a strong link between the growth of such businesses in an area and the impact on housing prices, predicting that Trafford is soon to undergo a significant surge in house prices as a result.

Combine the strategic location, thriving economy and scale of development opportunity with the excellent quality-of-life offer and booming residential market, and it is easy to see the appeal of Trafford to new investors!

For further information about investment opportunities in Trafford, contact Trafford Council's Economic Growth Team at business@trafford.gov.uk or visit www.investintrafford.com



Future Carrington is a landmark development opportunity in Trafford, at the heart of the Northern Powerhouse. One of the largest investment projects in the Greater Manchester area, HIMOR Group in partnership with Trafford Council is seeking to deliver a transformational vision.

- 1,660 acres of opportunity
- 750,000 sq.m of logistics development
- 17,500 sq.m of high quality office space
- Up to 5,000 residential units
- Open space and recreation

delivering a vision

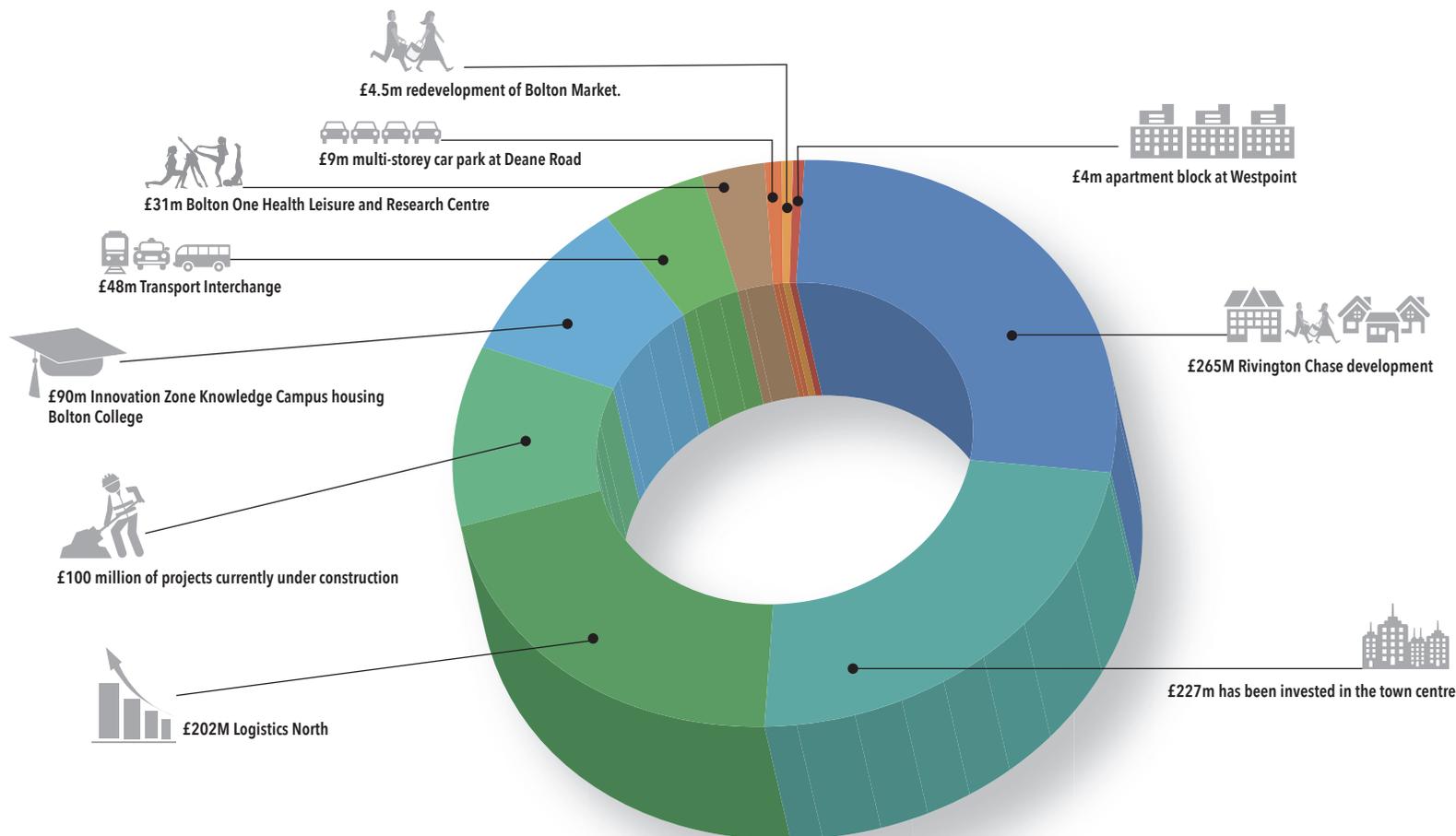
0161 776 4401
info@futurecarrington.com



TRAFFORD - FIRST FOR INVESTMENT

HIMOR

Bolton Redevelopment Plans Help Fuel the Northern Powerhouse



Bolton's igniting interest among business leaders with its energetic £1bn economic development programme.

Since flicking the switch on its ambitious plan in 2006, Bolton Council's spotlight has been firmly on creating clean, modern and spacious places to give companies the edge they need to compete in today's fast moving global economy.

Speed is crucial in business and whether it's that last minute deal that has to be done face to face or a shipment of goods that's needed urgently Bolton is well placed to deliver results. The town is only four miles from the M60 and M61, putting the lucrative markets of Manchester, Preston, Leeds and Liverpool within easy reach.

With fast, frequent and modern trains, journeys from Bolton's new Transport Interchange to Manchester takes just 20 minutes, Manchester International Airport 40 minutes, and London two and a half hours.

Bolton's charged up and ready to go with a wide selection of grade A office spaces and business parks providing ample space and flexibility for companies to grow. With rapidly expanding prime industrial and housing stock the area is an attractive destination for investors and there are business grants, incentives, Economic Development/Innovation Zones and competitive business rates to help business establish themselves in the area.

The ambitious development plan is well-advanced on projects that are critical in underpinning and driving Bolton's future growth and success particularly those focusing on its town centre, Rivington Chase in

Horwich and Logistics North at Cutacre.

Already 227m has been invested in the town centre with a; £90m Innovation Zone Knowledge Campus housing Bolton College, Bolton Sixth Form College and the University of Bolton; £9m multi-storey car park at Deane Road; £4m apartment block at Westpoint; £31m Bolton One Health Leisure and Research Centre and £4.5m redevelopment of Bolton Market.

There's also £100 million of projects currently under construction including the; £48m Transport Interchange; further expansion of the Innovation Zone Knowledge Campus and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics centre (STEM); University Technical College; Newport Street Gateway Improvement Scheme and office development; a new £40m academic village and exciting retail developments; Town Hall, The Albert Halls and Octagon Theatre improvement schemes. Also, there's a new nine screen cinema and restaurant space as part of the £20m refurbishment of Market Place Shopping Centre.

Rivington Chase is a mixed use development including up to 1,700 new homes, employment areas, local shops and facilities and major areas of public open space and supporting infrastructure which will create up to 1,350 new full time jobs - the £265m redevelopment of the 180 acre site is one of the largest regeneration schemes ever seen in the North.

Logistics North is developing into the largest warehousing, distribution and employment site in Greater Manchester, offering bespoke design and build

opportunities ranging from 20,000 to one million sq. ft. all with immediate access to Junction 4 of the M61 which is only three miles from the M60 and M62. A large 225 hectare Country Park will also be created at the site and it is expected the development will contribute an additional £65 million to the local economy annually. Supermarket giant Aldi is moving its NW headquarters and distribution centre to the site and Joy Global, an international mining equipment manufacturer, is setting up a base here too. Other companies are being attracted to the site including MBDA who have taken an eight-acre site for the development of a new 100,000 sq. ft. manufacturing and office complex.

Modern business needs to be positive and stay ahead of the game and a flexible and skilled workforce is essential to long term success and Bolton is committed to helping deliver this to generate jobs for its 280,400 residents (ONS 2014 population estimate).

It was Bolton's Samuel Crompton whose inventions kick started the Industrial Revolution, so perhaps it's no surprise that the town is investing heavily in its University and College facilities. The borough has a reputation for providing high standards of education and there is a huge expansion in University and College students studying in the town, attracted by the new state of the art facilities on offer.

Located on the edge of the West Pennine Moors, Bolton offers easy access to beautiful country spaces and parks and picturesque towns that have comparatively affordable housing. It also has many acclaimed cultural and leisure assets including Bolton's Central

Library, Museum, Archive and Aquarium, the Octagon Theatre and The Albert Halls plus a rich and diverse history and heritage with many listed buildings such as Smithills Hall and Hall 't' 'th' Wood and there's loads of other great things to do and see.

The council has also made significant investment into the visitor economy, attracting new events and activities with visitor numbers increasing to 6.4m visitors in 2013. Tourism is now worth £394m and supports 5,180 full time jobs across the borough.

An annual events programme has created a strong town centre focus making Bolton a place of year-round cultural, leisure and retail activity for residents, businesses and visitors alike. The gruelling Ironman UK Triathlon has been in Bolton for the last seven years, and attracts competitors and thousands of visitors from all over the world each July, boosting the local economy on average by £2.6 million.

The increasingly popular Bolton Food and Drink Festival held each August Bank Holiday weekend equally attracts audiences from across the country, with 201,911 visitors this year. With food producers taking over the town centre, cooking demonstrations from local and celebrity chefs including James Martin, John Torode and Lisa Faulkner and a great programme of live music and street entertainment it grows from strength to strength.

Bolton's investment in development and regeneration will spark extra energy to drive economic prosperity across the region.

To find out more about development opportunities contact Business Bolton on 01204 334444 or email: evolve@bolton.gov.uk



Investin Bolton

When it comes to the economic regeneration of Greater Manchester, Bolton is leading the way.

As a key economic location within the region, continued confidence, despite challenging times, has seen close to £1 billion of investment; ensuring both public and private sector initiatives have been developed and delivered.

With £100 million of projects under construction for 2015/2016, including the £48 million Transport Interchange, further expansion of the knowledge campus with the development of the new University Technical College and a proposed 750 unit Academic Village, as well as the completion of the Market Place cinema and restaurant scheme, growth and investment continue at a pace. Add the major developments at Logistics North and Rivington Chase and you can see why the economic future for Bolton is bright.

Our vision is clear and our ambitions exciting, to create a first class destination for people who live, work, study, visit or invest in Bolton.

To learn more about the opportunities available in our great town visit
www.bolton.gov.uk/investinbolton

**Bolton
Council**

Public Sector Team of the year - North West Property Awards



Newcastle is famous for its bridges above the Tyne River

North East boasts cars, coastline and cathedrals

As the only region in the UK with a trade surplus, the **North East of England** is an economic powerhouse in its own right, as well as home to some of the most stunning scenery in the UK

The North East region covers Northumberland, County Durham, Tyne and Wear, and the Tees Valley, and forms part of the border between England and Scotland.

According to the latest figures from the Office for National Statistics, the North East has a total population of 2.6 million and boasts an average population growth rate of 0.3%. The

North East Local Enterprise Partnership estimates the region contributed a gross value added (GVA) of £31bn to the UK economy in 2012.

Newcastle upon Tyne is the largest city in the North East with a population of just under 280,000. The city is famous for its vibrant night life, football team and is also home to the Great North Run, which is the largest half-marathon in Europe

with 57,000 runners taking part in 2015.

Sunderland is the second largest city in the region with a population of 177,000 and it is also home to the Nissan car manufacturing plant, which has built more than 8 million cars since it was first opened in 1986. The Nissan factory is one of the largest of its kind in the country in the North East Chamber of Commerce estimate that one in three cars built in the UK car now come from Nissan's Sunderland plant.

The cathedral city of Durham is the county town of County Durham and other large towns and cities in the region include Gateshead, Middlesbrough and Stockton-on-Tees.

The North East is also home to five universities – Durham, Newcastle, Northumbria, Sunderland and Teesside, which all offer world-class teaching and research facilities, covering a wide variety of subjects.

The region has excellent transport connections, with rail links allowing easy access to both London and Edinburgh.

Newcastle International Airport has been serving the people of the North East for more than 75 years. In 2012 it helped enable 4.4 million passengers fly to destinations all over the world.

With a catchment area stretching from the Scottish Borders to Cumbria and North Yorkshire, Newcastle International is among the largest regional airports in the UK and has an ambitious masterplan, which sets out growth plans to 2030.

Currently, the airport supports 7,800 jobs across the region and by 2030 this will rise to 10,000.

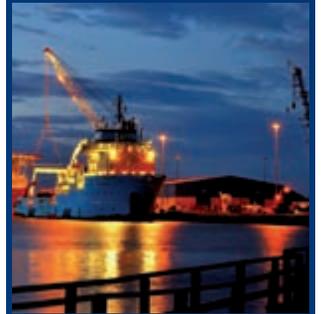
The airport delivered £646m to the regional economy in 2012, and by 2030 it is estimated that this figure will grow substantially to up to £1.3bn.

The Port of Tyne was named UK Port of the Year last year in the National Transport Awards.

The port one of the UK's major deep sea ports and has proved to be a vital trading gateway to Europe and beyond.

And the region also has a strong oil and gas industry, having benefitted from North

Research hub for renewable energy



The Port of Blyth (see picture) has a long association with the wind energy sector, being the home of the first offshore wind farm in the UK and The National Renewable Energy Centre (Narec) research facility. It is the UK's national research centre for accelerating the deployment of offshore renewable energy technologies.

Narec's multi-disciplinary team of scientists and engineers operate some of Europe's largest research, development and testing facilities for offshore wind, wave, tidal and electrical network technologies.

The North East is also leading the way in other forms of renewable energy. A consortium of local businesses, known as Energi Coast, has invested more than £400m in the offshore wind market.

Sea oil and gas. The North East Chamber of Commerce estimates that 65,000 people in the region work in that sector.

The future of the region is in safe hands, with 88% of students in the North East getting 5 A*-C GCSEs, compared to a national average of 81.8%.

The North East Chamber of Commerce's international team have helped support the export of goods worth more than £100bn a year and they estimate the region has a trade surplus of around £3bn a year.

Office costs are half the price they are in London and 20% lower than in Leeds and Manchester.

And the North East is not just a region with a bright future. It is proud of its rich history and home to two World Heritage sites – Hadrian's Wall and Durham.

Top performing areas in the North East plus their costs					
Rank	District	Business location index score	National Rank (out of 324)	Cost score	National Rank (out of 324)
1	Newcastle-upon-Tyne	106.56	72	100.93	115
2	Stockton-on-Tees	100.45	130	87.89	187
3	North Tyneside	100.41	131	89.13	178
4	Co Durham	98.23	162	78.57	268
5	Gateshead	96.05	194	90.33	165

Source: Grant Thornton Business Location Index
© Grant Thornton

Darlington is a magnet for innovation.

It is written in every history book that it started with the railways, but now new books are being written and there will be stories of ground-breaking industries that came here or started here and have grown in the town and have brought with them national and international attention.

The town has been synonymous with ingenuity for more than 150 years and is now firmly focussed on making sure the next 150 are as equally productive and inspiring.

Strategically located in the North East of England, with excellent access to a number of locally and nationally significant transport assets, Darlington provides fast and direct access to markets or into intermodal transport chains. Couple this with a wide range of sites and premises providing opportunities across all sectors; a cost competitive location within the North East with salary and office/premises costs lower than the UK average; a highly skilled local workforce; nationally recognised further education and training provision and a quality housing offer to suit all budgets and it's no surprise that Darlington is a magnet for established as well as young companies, start-ups and entrepreneurs.

With over £500million of public and private sector investment attracted into the area over the last five years, Darlington is undergoing one of its most exciting periods of



LINGFIELD OVERHEAD
Lingfield Point is a 90 acre business park providing high specification office space and warehousing space. Lingfield Point is located on Darlington's Eastern Transport Corridor, providing easy access to the road, rail, air and sea network at Teesport.

growth. Recent developments include:-

- The opening of the £38m National Biologics Manufacturing Centre, which will support the growth of the UK's biologics industry;
- The £30m re-development of Feethams – a prime town centre site to create a state of the art leisure complex featuring a nine screen multiplex cinema, 80 bedroom hotel, as well as a number of national and independent bars and restaurants making it a hub of leisure activity;
- The re-development of Central Park, one of the North East's most exciting developments. This prominent 74 acre high quality mixed use development sites within close proximity to the Town Centre and Darlington Station. Home to Teesside University, Darlington

College and C-STATE (the Centre for Subsea Technology Awareness, Training and Education, along with the £6.6m 'Business Central' and the £38m National Biologics Manufacturing Centre, both of which opened in 2015, Central Park provides further development opportunities for the biologics/pharmaceutical research; digital and subsea sectors.

Combine this with significant investment into the transport network, new housing, educational facilities and the public realm and you have an area that is serious about investing in its future.

From national headquarters to back-room inventors, we are justifiably proud of our town and excited and confident about its



FAVERDALE
which provides fast and direct access to the strategic road network. Faverdale is the home of a number of national distribution centres for businesses such as Argos Direct and Aldi, as well as being a key manufacturing hub in Darlington.

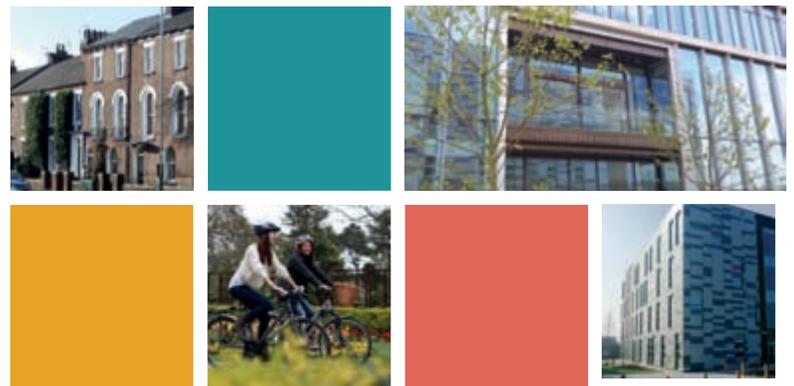
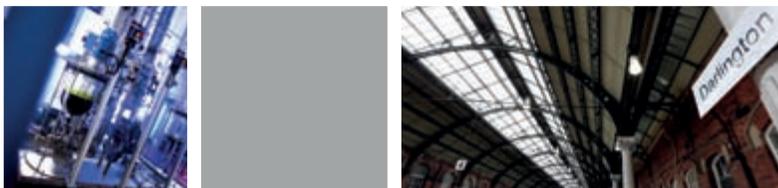
future. And the whole town is ready to open its doors to anyone who wants to share in that success and be a part of the Darlington story. Working in partnership with Tees Valley Unlimited (the Tees Valley Local Enterprise Partnership), the Invest in Darlington team have a strong track record of working with investors to deliver major projects in Darlington. We provide a tailor made service for businesses relocating and expanding in Darlington, including:-

- identification of suitable sites and premises;
- help with site visits and tours;
- advice on grants and financial incentives available within Darlington and the Tees Valley;
- support in relation to skills and training; and assistance with information on housing/schooling provision, economic data and transport networks;
- links to key business intermediaries;
- ongoing support as necessary.

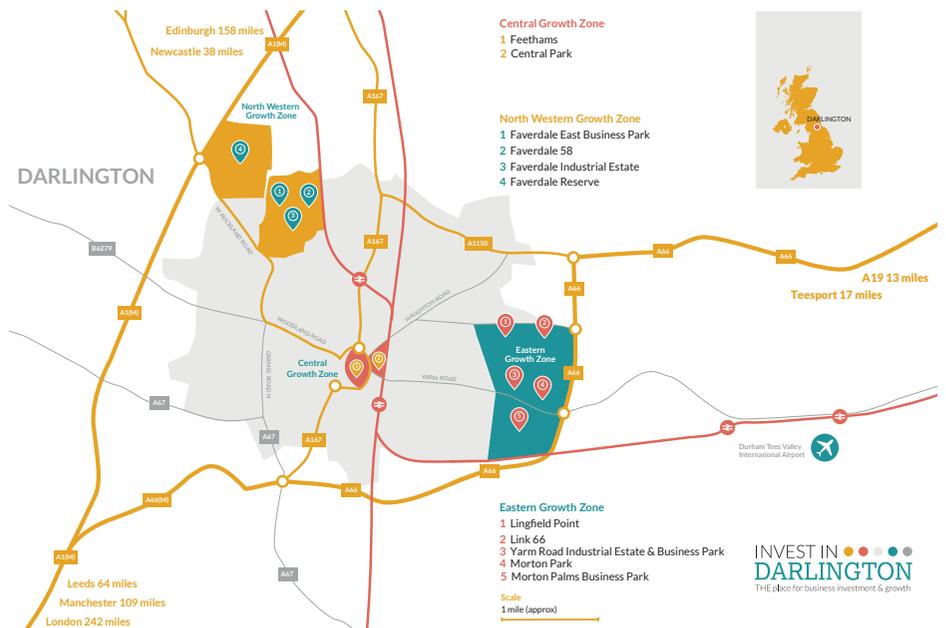
Investors are assigned a dedicated single point of contact who will handle your enquiry to provide a confidential, coordinated and bespoke response from the council (planning applications, highways etc) and partner agencies. Our services have been designed to make your next expansion project as smooth and simple as possible.

www.investindarlington.co.uk

INVEST IN DARLINGTON



- EXCELLENT TRANSPORT LINKS VIA ROAD, RAIL, AIR AND PORT;
- A COST COMPETITIVE LOCATION WITHIN THE NORTH EAST;
- A WIDE RANGE OF DEVELOPMENT SITES
- A HIGHLY SKILLED LOCAL WORKFORCE;
- NATIONALLY RECOGNISED FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROVISION;
- A QUALITY HOUSING OFFER TO SUIT ALL BUDGETS;
- A HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE IN THE HEART OF THE NORTH EAST



WEB www.investindarlington.co.uk

EMAIL invest@darlington.gov.uk

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DARLINGTON

Tees Valley Unlimited

DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

'In 2012, total Scottish exports excluding those to other parts of the UK were estimated at £26 billion, of which 59% were attributable to manufacturing'

The most recent census in 2011 shows the population of Scotland was almost 5.3m

The land of colour, industry and oil

Famous the world over for its dramatic scenery and vibrant culture, **Scotland** has a special place in the history of the United Kingdom

Visitors from all over the world are attracted by Scotland's distinctive culture, welcoming people and thriving commerce.

Covering the northern third of the island of Great Britain, Scotland has its own assembly and devolved government – although outright independence was rejected in a referendum last year.

It shares a border with England to the south and is otherwise surrounded by water, with more than 790 islands, and includes seven cities: Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Inverness, Stirling and Perth. Its local government is based on 32 unitary councils.

Edinburgh, the country's capital and second-largest city, was the hub of the Scottish Enlightenment of the 18th century which transformed

the country into one of the commercial, intellectual, and industrial powerhouses of Europe.

The second largest city, Glasgow, was once one of the world's leading industrial centres and now lies at the heart of the Greater Glasgow conurbation, while the waters surrounding Scotland, including a large sector of the North Atlantic and the North Sea, contain the largest oil reserves in the European Union.

The most recent census in 2011 shows the population of Scotland was almost 5.3m, the highest ever, with 62% stating their national identity as 'Scottish only', 18% as 'Scottish and British', 8% as 'British only' and 4% choosing other national identities.

The average number of people per square kilometre in Scotland is 68, among the lowest of the EU countries. However, there

are huge variations across the country. The Western Isles and the Highlands have just nine people per square kilometre whereas Glasgow has 3,395.

Although Edinburgh is the capital of Scotland, the largest city is Glasgow, which has just over 584,000 inhabitants. The Greater Glasgow conurbation, with a population of almost 1.2 million, is home to nearly a quarter of Scotland's population. The Central Belt is where most of the main towns and cities are located, including Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee and Perth. Scotland's only major city outside the Central Belt is the Aberdeen.

Only the more accessible and larger islands remain inhabited. The Southern Uplands are essentially rural in nature and dominated by agriculture and forestry. Because of housing problems in Glasgow and

Edinburgh, five new towns were created between 1947 and 1966.

Separate legal, educational and religious institutions distinct from those in the remainder of the UK have all contributed to the distinctive Scottish culture and national identity, though outright independence was rejected in a referendum in 2014.

Traditionally, the Scottish economy has been dominated by heavy industry including shipbuilding in Glasgow, coal mining and steel, though de-industrialisation during the 1970s and 1980s saw a shift towards a more service-oriented economy as in the rest of the UK.

Industries associated with the extraction of North Sea oil, however, continue to be important employers, centred on Aberdeen in the north east of the country.

Financial services are also a strong and long-established part of Scotland's economy, centring on Edinburgh, home to many major companies in the sector.

In 2012, total Scottish exports excluding those to other parts of the UK were estimated at £26bn, of which 59% were attributable to manufacturing. Scotland's primary exports include whisky, electronics and financial services.

Scotland has an extensive railway network and connections to England. There is an extensive road network throughout the country. Motorways are concentrated in the central belt, with major roads connecting the rest of Scotland and England.

Four international airports offer scheduled services to Europe, North America and Asia, as well as to Northern Ireland, England and Wales.

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Energetica

Scotland's Energy Corridor

Energetica is a 25-year programme that seeks to create a world-class development corridor that is internationally recognised as the location of choice for oil & gas, energy and technology organisations of all sizes. Conceived in 2007, the programme is being managed in partnership by Scottish Enterprise, Aberdeenshire Council and Aberdeen City Council.

A global showcase for energy technology development and energy efficiency, Energetica aims to create an exemplar and innovative, sustainable development corridor within a natural and built coastal environment seeking to integrate two key components - sustainable economic growth and quality of life.

The Energetica Corridor stretches over 30-miles from Bridge of Don in Aberdeen, north to Peterhead and west around Aberdeen International Airport. It is becoming a leading destination for innovation, knowledge, learning and skills in current and future energy generation, hosting the organisations and research institutions that will collaborate to meet the world's energy challenges.

Significant investment in transport infrastructure, ready access to energy industry know-how and an established supply chain are among the reasons that Energetica is an attractive investment opportunity.

Work has now begun on the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR), a £745million roads project which is due for completion by winter 2017. Along with the dualling of the A90 between Balmedie and Tippetty, through the heart of the corridor, the AWPR will improve traffic flow and open the north-east of Scotland to better connections between north and south of Aberdeen.

Aberdeen International Airport is one of the best connected regional airports in the UK, with 25 hub departures every weekday. Currently in its first stage of its biggest transition in over 35 years, the multi-million pound terminal transformation project will see the expansion of the departures lounge, new catering and retail space, international arrivals improvements, a new expanded security search area, and increased executive lounge capacity.

Peterhead is one of the UK's most versatile ports, offering all-weather deepwater berthing facilities and serving both fishing and energy sectors. Plans have been unveiled for a £47million investment into Peterhead Harbour. Proposals drawn up by Peterhead Port Authority would develop the facility into a fully integrated, state-of-the-art fishing hub by the end of 2016, whilst maintaining capacity for supply and maintenance vessels associated with the energy sector.

Shell and Scottish & Southern Energy (SSE) are planning the world's first post combustion CCS plant on a gas turbine at Peterhead Power Station, with the project receiving planning permission in June 2015. The proposal is to take CO2 emissions from a 385 megawatt turbine directly to the depleted Goldeneye field for storage.

The area's proximity to existing offshore infrastructure, together with unrivalled engineering expertise means that the project, which could be up and running by 2020, could create up to 600 jobs during construction and is considered to be a strong contender for a share of a £1billion UK Government fund to commercialise this crucial technology. A recently published report into the potential for using Peterhead Port as a carbon import hub demonstrated that this project is putting an international spotlight on the Energetica Corridor in

terms of world-leading innovation.

At the gateway to the corridor, the Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre (AECC) is a £330million investment to create a 10,000 capacity arena as well as exhibition, conferencing and hotel facilities set in an attractive landscaped environment close to the Airport and AWPR junction.

There are currently eight business parks that can accommodate a variety of uses and sizes of property from single desk start-ups to large scale HQ office developments, with a ninth park also coming forward.

A key area of development is around Aberdeen International Airport (AIA) where three new business parks are under development. Officially opened in January 2015, D2 Business Park is already hosting international firms like BP, Emerson and ASCO, with serviced sites still available.

Neighbouring Aberdeen International Business Park comprises up to 1 million sq ft of proposed development within forty acres of a beautifully landscaped business park. In Scotland's biggest single office letting deal, Phase 1 was pre-let to Aker Solutions.

Nearby ABZ is a major international commercial park, home to global oil and gas technology companies, such as Bowtech Products' headquarters. Located on the approach to AIA, connectivity is one of ABZ's primary benefits.

Adding to ABZ Business Park's credentials, national hotel and leisure developer Dominvs Group recently completed the construction of two major new hotels with a combined value of £25million. Dominvs opened a 190 bedroom 3-star Holiday Inn Express in June 2015 and 165 bedroom 4-star Crowne Plaza hotel in September 2015.

In the heart of Energetica, Enerfield

Business Park is specifically designed to complement the wider landscape. Enerfield is nestled in the Aberdeenshire countryside, adjacent to the A90 Aberdeen to Peterhead road, with access to the planned Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR).

The planned Energetica Commercial Park in Peterhead will offer cost effective development opportunities, ideal for companies seeking to get involved in the emerging decommissioning and renewable sectors and within easy reach of Peterhead Harbour.

The Core is a 100 acre business park offering high quality and bespoke office, industrial, workshop, warehouse and leisure facilities which lies at the gateway to the Energetica Corridor. It plays a key role in attracting investment and new business to the Energetica Corridor, with an aim to be one of the UK's most energy efficient, low carbon business communities.

The Aberdeen Energy & Innovation Parks already houses over 80 companies, with more tailored packages available, and the Balmacassie Commercial Park in Ellon offers an alternative location for businesses seeking to find a site outside of, but with close proximity to Peterhead and Aberdeen. A ninth business park at Blackdog, just north of Aberdeen is currently progressing through the planning process. Located at a key junction on the northern leg of the AWPR this 64 acre site will offer a mix of office, retail and other commercial space from 2017 onwards.

These are just a taste of the exciting new developments currently coming forward within the Energetica Corridor. To find out more:

Web: www.energetica.uk.com
Email: info@energetica.uk.com
Twitter: [@energetica_UK](https://twitter.com/energetica_UK)



THE north-east has long been recognised as a powerhouse for Scotland and the UK, but a City Region Deal could help to maintain this success for years to come.

A “Statement of Intent” was submitted to UK and Scottish governments on September 4.

Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire councils have been working in partnership on detailed proposals for an Aberdeen City Region Deal and have the support of the area’s most influential business leaders.

A range of engagement has been undertaken to inform the plans and this has shaped the latest stage of the bid.

The Aberdeen City Region Deal would improve transport links, infrastructure and housing to meet the demands of a growing population, while investing in innovation, research and development and internationalisation to ensure that the area continues to contribute substantially to UK plc for decades to come.

It is a chance to anchor the oil and gas industry in the north-east, but also to expand upon the expertise and innovation that already exists here, to the benefit of the wider energy sector and related industries.

The Statement of Intent looks at four key policy areas – housing, connectivity, innovation and internationalisation.

In terms of housing, the proposals include a request for support to unlock constrained sites to supply housing land, a housing funding for key workers and measures to help solve housing cost issues.

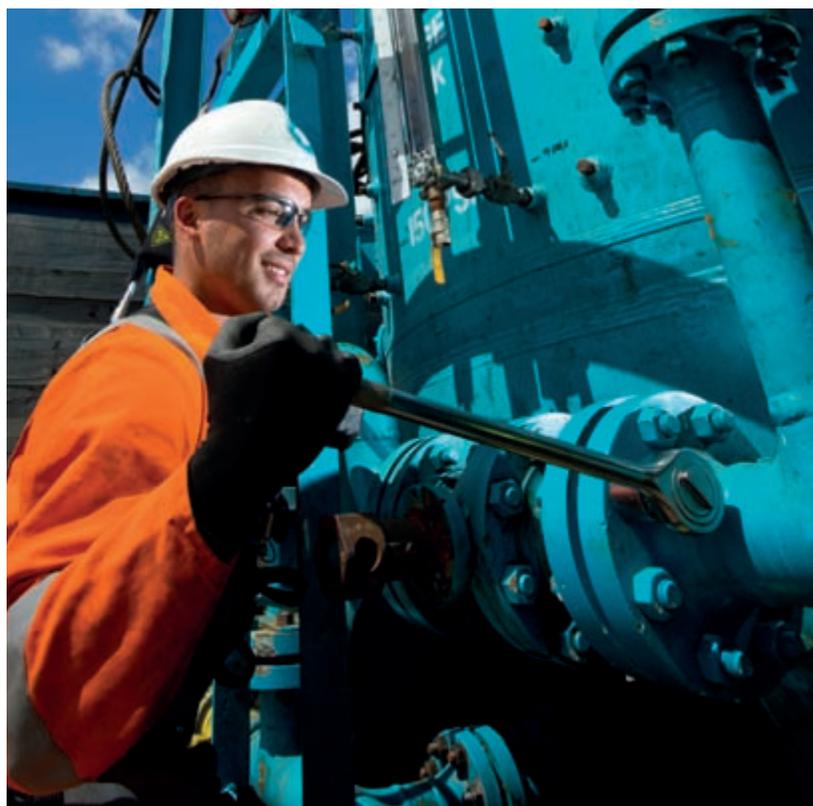
In the area of connectivity, there are plans for rail service improvements, proposals to deal with traffic congestion and improved harbour and airport connections along with greater provision of ultra-fast digital infrastructure.

The third strand of innovation aims to promote the region as a global centre of excellence in the field of research and the development of an Oil and Gas Technology Institute and a Scottish Centre for bio-pharmaceuticals.

Under internationalisation, there would also be efforts to boost trade, tourism and inward investment in the region.

Detailed plans in these four areas are being worked on for discussion with both governments as the negotiation progresses.

The development of the bid has been underpinned by the collaboration between



the public and private sectors in the Aberdeen region, and that will continue throughout the process. Much of the focus of the City Region Deal bid has been on the future of the North Sea oil and gas industry.

The challenges facing the sector in recent months have been well documented and businesses have been exploring many ways to reduce their costs for some time now.

Many recognise that the City Region Deal will help them to maintain their competitiveness, supporting jobs, providing crucial infrastructure and promoting innovation.

The benefits of a successful Aberdeen City Region are felt far beyond the north-east of Scotland – oil and gas is a global business with skills and expertise exported across the world from research and development, technology and innovation.

Many oil and gas companies based in Aberdeen are firmly embedded in key positions of influence in the global energy sector.

The expertise developed in the North Sea by subsea engineering contractors has allowed the UK to hold around 40% of the global market worth an estimated £20billion.

The oil and gas industry supports thousands of jobs across the UK through

supply chains, and contributes significantly to HM Treasury.

In 2011/12, the oil & gas industry was responsible for 16.4 percent of all corporation tax collected in the UK.

In 2013, the supply chain in the UK generated more than £39billion of sales, with similar figures estimated for 2014.

Further statistics provided by industry body Oil and Gas UK this year show that oil and gas provided 68% of the UK’s total primary energy in 2014, with oil for transport and gas for heating being dominant in these markets.

In 2030, 70% of the UK’s total primary energy is expected to come from oil and gas, according to the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC).

Overall, since 1970, the industry has paid over £330billion in taxes.

The City Region Deal can ensure that the region continues to provide a high return for the UK Treasury for many years to come.

Speaking at the time of submission of the Statement of Intent bid, Aberdeen City Council Leader, Councillor Jenny Laing, said: “We believe that the commitments this Statement of Intent identifies can form the basis for a City Region Deal that will benefit not only the economy of the north-east, but

the rest of Scotland and the wider UK.

“The challenge is to work towards a deal that will maximise the benefits of co-ordinated new and accelerated investment in the Aberdeen City Region.”

Aberdeenshire Council co-leader, Councillor Martin Kitts-Hayes, added: “We will continue to engage and collaborate with the two governments to deliver a City Region Deal that will ultimately contribute to the economic vision for the north-east of Scotland.”

That vision extends beyond the work that has gone into the City Region Deal proposals, and has informed efforts channeled into the Energetica Programme for the north-east.

A range of partner organisations, including Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Future (ACSEF), Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce, Skills Development Scotland, VisitScotland, Scottish European Green Energy Centre, Innovation Technology Facilitators and the city’s two universities, have been working for some time now on the project.

The aim of the Energetica Programme is to make the region the location of choice for high value oil and gas and renewable energy organisations, and a first choice for companies of all sizes operating in other high value, quality niche markets.

Energetica comprises a number of key projects and workstreams with the aim of delivering four strategic objectives; to consolidate the region’s position as one of the world’s major energy centres and the energy capital of Europe, to attract new high-value investment and people to the region, to grow the international trade of indigenous business and to create a location that seeks to maximise both quality of design/development and quality of life.

The importance of all of this work to ensure the continued success and prosperity of the Aberdeen City Region cannot be underestimated to Scotland and the whole of the UK.

This is already a successful region which plays a significant role in contribution to the financial well-being of Scotland, the UK and globally.

By even greater collaboration across industry and all layers of government, we can protect the competitiveness of the oil and gas industry already firmly established here, work to diversify in other areas, and help to power tomorrow’s world.

A youthful population and a bright future

Its civil conflict now a fading memory, Northern Ireland has maintained its traditional hospitality and reputation as one of the UK's most attractive regions – and its economy looks well set to gather strength.

Occupying the North East of the island of Ireland, it covers

Stunning landscapes, a vibrant culture and welcoming people: **Northern Ireland** is a corner of the UK renowned for its vitality

13,600km², equivalent to 6% of the total area of the UK, and shares a border with the Republic of Ireland.

With just 1.8 million residents

it is the smallest of the English regions in terms of population, and its profile reveals one of the youngest demographics in the UK. The latest figures show under-16s

made up 21.0% of the population in mid-2012 compared with 18.8% for the UK.

Northern Ireland's economy is the smallest of the four countries of the UK, traditionally based on industry including shipbuilding, rope manufacture and textiles.

Contributing 2% of the UK's economic output on the latest figures, most heavy industry has now been replaced by services, but Northern Ireland enjoys certain advantages as it forges its future. Its universities are of high quality, labour costs are low, and unlike the rest of Britain the region has a land border with a euro zone country.

The Belfast metropolitan area dominates in population terms, accounting for more than a third of the region's inhabitants. In mid-2012, Northern Ireland's population density was 134 people per km², the second lowest of all UK countries.

With the decline of traditional industries the unemployment rate

stood at 7.5% on the latest figures while the employment rate was 66.3%, compared with the UK's 71.5%.

Nearly a fifth of people aged 16-to-64 had no qualifications in 2012 compared with 10.7% in Scotland, 11.4% in Wales and 9.5% in England.

In April 2012, median gross weekly earnings for full-time adult employees in Northern Ireland were £460, lower than Scotland and England but higher than Wales, while gross disposable household income was the third lowest among the UK counties and English regions at £14,000 per head in 2011.

House prices are the lowest in the UK, with an average in June 2013 of £130,000, compared with £162,000 in Wales, £181,000 for Scotland and £251,000 in England.

Northern Ireland is served by three airports – Belfast International, George Best Belfast City and City of Derry in County Londonderry. Major sea ports at Larne and Belfast carry passengers and freight between Great Britain and Northern Ireland.



Belfast's metropolitan area accounts for more than a third of the region's inhabitants

Famed for culture and industrial heritage

Wales maintains a unique identity and an economy based on light industry and tourism

With three national parks, picturesque mountains and its own language, Wales is a magnet for tourists, attracting more than 600,000 visitors annually.

It boasts three national parks, five areas of outstanding natural beauty and many castles, most of them built to maintain the English conquest in times past.

Wales is the third biggest of the UK countries and English regions, smaller in area than Scotland but larger than any English region except South West.

It covers 9% of the total area of the UK at 20,700km².

The region is generally mountainous, with its highest peaks in the north and central areas, especially in Snowdonia.

Although Wales closely shares its political and social history with the rest of Great Britain, and the vast majority of the population speaks English, the country has retained a distinct cultural identity and is officially bilingual.

It has its own devolved government based in Cardiff and is divided into 22 council areas responsible for the provision of all local government services, including education, social work, environment and roads services.

At the dawn of the Industrial Revolution, development of the mining and metallurgical industries transformed the country from an agricultural society into an industrial nation.

The South Wales coalfield's exploitation caused a rapid expansion of the population.

Now that the country's traditional extractive and heavy industries have gone or are in decline, Wales' economy depends on the public sector, light and service industries and tourism.

Its economic output measured by gross value added was £45.5bn in 2010, 74% of the average for the UK.

It had a population of 3.1 million at mid-2012, almost 5% of the UK total. This makes it smaller than Scotland in terms of population but larger than Northern Ireland and the North East region.



Wales has its own devolved government based in Cardiff and divided into 22 council areas

Its population density was 148 people per km² lower than the average for England but higher than Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Two-thirds of the population live in south Wales, mainly in and around the capital, Cardiff, Swansea and Newport and in the nearby valleys.

The decline of industry has taken its toll in Wales. Unemployment was 8.2% on the latest figures, higher than the UK average of 7.8%,

while the employment rate stood at 69.4%, lower than the UK average of 71.5%.

Median gross weekly earnings for full-time adult employees were £455 compared to £498 in Scotland, £460 in Northern Ireland and £506 in the UK as a whole.

The average house price in Wales in June 2013 was £162,000, higher than the figure for Northern Ireland (£130,000) but below Scotland (£181,000) and England (£251,000).



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